

The
**AMERICAN
MUSIC LOVER**

JUNE, 1936
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Our Radio Dial

EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED

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The American Music Lover

A REVIEW FOR THE MODERN HOME

JUNE
1936

Volume II, No. 2

EDITORIAL

From the trend of our correspondence, since the inception of this magazine, we would gather that nothing has disturbed the American phonophile more than the society issues. The majority of writers seem to be opposed to the society plan — particularly as it has been handled up to date. Although, we are not against the idea of society issues — we cannot and never could subscribe wholeheartedly to the manner in which these have been handled. Without criticizing those who have developed and promoted the movement, which it must be admitted has done much to increase interest and respect for recorded music — we would like to say a few words *pro* and *con* regarding subscription sets, or so-called collector's issues.

Let us consider first, however, the collector of rare editions in general — he, who goes in for rare books, rare paintings, statuary, etc., and who is generally looked upon as an art connoisseur. His status is more often considered to be above the man who buys reprints, second editions, reproductions and clay models of famous bronzes and marbles. Without belittling his position, or depreciating the part he plays in developing the appreciation and value of the arts, it must be admitted that not all collectors of so-called rare editions or *objects d'art* are connoisseurs in the true sense of that word. Largely, most of this sort of thing is mixed up with dollars and cents values, and the inner urge to own something that one's neighbor does not have and probably never would be able to.

Many collectors of rare books are primarily interested in the binding, the fact that the frontispiece contains an autograph of the author, or the

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ERNST WOLFF . . .

The talented young
German baritone who
sings the Robert Franz
Songs (See page 57).



NINON VALLIN . . .

whose lovely voice
contributes to the suc-
cess of the recorded
version of LOUISE . . .
(See page 58)

"Music Is My Hobby"

A UNIQUE AND FASCINATING RADIO PROGRAM

By PAUL GIRARD

"**B**ACK in the days of Queen Elizabeth, an English gentleman's education was not considered complete until he had acquired the ability to play the lute or some other musical instrument, and to join in the singing of madrigals, rounds and other part songs. In our day, music has become such a highly specialized art that most of us are content to enjoy our music from the side lines, thereby excluding ourselves from a particularly gratifying pleasure. Not all of us, of course, for there are still persons who cultivate music for the sheer joy of it — without any ambition or desire to professionalize their gifts for box-office receipts."

The above speech, written by Walter Koons — music editor of the National Broadcasting Company's Press Department, was used as an opening announcement to one of the **Music Is My Hobby* programs given last September. It is a speech upon which we can all ponder, because too many people today think that music is the exclusive right and privilege of professional musicians.

If a person — who claims music as a hobby — happens to be a successful business executive or a conscientious housewife, primarily concerned in the running of an important establishment or the bringing up of a large family, probably not one out of a half dozen immediate neighbors or friends acknowledge or value either of their musical proclivities for their honest worth. It might be that he or she plays the piano — more than reasonably well — or some other instrument, or again — either he or she may have an unusually pleasing voice, yet any effort to *make* music on either of their parts is not often taken seriously by their friends and neighbors.

When a man earns no payment for his cultural endeavors, they are not worthily regarded by his fellowmen. For most of life's

values — with the greater majority of people — are too definitely tied up with the dollar and cents marks. People forget that apart from the earning capacity of a man, that his efforts — his admitted hobbies — are not only "particularly gratifying pleasures," but the things that help stimulate him mentally and physically — the things that help recharge the dynamo of his existence.

Frequently, the people who have admitted hobbies, who participate in music in the home, are the ones whose energy seems to be unbounded, and whose youthful verve is the envy of their fellowmen. A hobby, comprehensively developed, has a most satisfying effect on the inner man, and frequently it assists one to shut off anxieties and unessential worries. Because we cannot all be professionals — that does not necessarily preclude the possibility of true participation in music. It is a matter for comprehensive absorption and honest production, for no hobby is a success unless treated with the respect and esteem that one puts into his recognized work. When a hobby is considered and developed in this manner, the hobbyist is no amateur, but instead — a non-professional. This is particularly true of those who study and perform music with insight and understanding apart from their daily tasks.

We can find in music the supplement to almost every human emotion, that is if we seek out the right music at the right time. It has been pertinently said, that too often we seek to enjoy our music by endeavoring to place ourselves in the mood with the music that comes to us. Those who can make music, and those who — although not similarly capable — own a representative library of records, have the advantage on the rest of mankind of being able to enjoy music in agreement with their passing moods; and also to be able to promote desired moods by making music inductive to their desires.

Despite the fact that most friends and neighbors fail to recognize the musical talents

*Thursdays — 7:45 to 8:00 P. M., EDST, over NBC-WJZ network.

of the non-professional musician — radio is doing so and has been for some time past. *Music Is My Hobby* is a program now three years old, which weekly presents men and women, many of whom are prominent in the public eye, whose life's work is often quite alien to music, but who nevertheless *make* music on the side because of the gratifying benefits obtained from active, rather than inactive, participation in it, to say nothing of the cultural elements involved.

Music Is My Hobby is no "amateur broadcast" or similar publicity stunt, featuring untrained talent and musical curiosities, but instead a program exploiting trained musicians who are simply non-professionals. There is no sponsor for this program, and none will ever be accepted. For this reason, it is one of the most significant efforts to incite participation in music that has been put before the public in recent years, and is undeniably one of radio's most outstanding cultural features.

Among the prominent people who have made music for the edification and pleasure of a vast friendly audience of radio listeners on this broadcast, which is nationwide in scope, have been Hendrik Willem van Loon, the historian and biographer; Hartwell Cabell and Lewis M. Isaacs, prominent attorneys; Vladimir Karapetoff, eminent scientist; William M. Taylor, vice president of a New York Bank; Alfred Hopkins, noted architect; Edgar Boles, president of the General Reassurance Company, and Louis J. Fink, nationally known Life Insurance Executive.

Among others, have been college professors, theologians, advertising men, actresses and others variously handicapped from public participation in music.

Music for pleasure — music for gratification — music as a hobby — helps to develop the mental processes essential to successful living, states Professor Karapetoff, who is both a pianist and a cellist — besides an outstanding figure in the world of science.

"It is a peculiar thing," he says, "a good thing to take in through your ear, but a better thing to draw out of yourself."

With Mr. van Loon music is his greatest hobby, because through participation in this great art he has been able to acquire an insight into the souls of great men.

" . . . the only good things we do in this world," he says, "are the things we do because it is such fun to do them."

Lewis M. Isaacs, attorney, who is both a composer and pianist, finds there is no antagonism between the practice of the law and the practice of music. "I have found that the very mental processes involved in the technique of musical composition," he says, "are of value to me in developing the argument in a legal brief."

William T. Taylor, the banker, says that he has studied music "for his own amazement." Here is assuredly a statement over which to ponder. Wonderment is a great mental stimulator, and when we encounter a force in life which incites "amazement" we do well to embrace it.

Louis J. Fink, the insurance executive, states that "making music is the most delightful way of enjoying spare time that I have yet discovered, and the benefits derived from this type of mental concentration are of a most practical value to one engaged in commercial pursuits. I have found that making music carries me into the stratospheres of imagination, and an active imagination is just as important to a business man today as his telephone and typewriter."

Music Is My Hobby is a program for young and old which proves conclusively the great gratification that can be acquired in musical self-expression and the pleasure that can be derived through same. The good that a program like this does cannot be overestimated. It has restored more than one person's faith in the pleasure of music. And, the "pleasure of music" is the all important thing. Failure in anything enters when the fun of doing the thing passes from it. The ability to express music does not necessarily require years of tedious work. People can find pleasure in learning to perform music in their leisure time. If at first you perform only fairly well, remember later you will play better. And so, it goes! A child does not need to be driven in his studies, if the right thought is advanced to him regarding them. Since *Music Is My Hobby*, in our estimation, seeks to advance that right thought, we recommend this broadcast to all parents as well as to all music lovers.

The Permanent Chopin

AS REVEALED IN THE MAZURKAS

By PHILIP BARR

Part II.

THREE of Chopin's greatest Mazurkas are in the key of C Sharp Minor; they are the one already mentioned, *Opus 30, No. 4*, and *Opus 41, No. 1*, and *Opus 50, No. 3*. The second of these, *Opus 41, No. 1*, is a magnificent work — perhaps the most powerful of the Mazurkas. Its climax in double octaves is famous; I have spoken already of its use of the Eastern augmented second in combination with the Phrygian mode. This produces the effect of more major and minor alternations. *Opus 50, No. 3* is much neglected — it is not even recorded. Attention is always drawn to its "imitational" opening; unfortunately most writers mention nothing else about it, thus leaving the impression that the whole work is some unnatural piece of pseudo-Bach, whereas it is one of the most typically Chopinesque of all the Mazurkas. A great deal of it is absolutely non-contrapuntal, and the imitational figure when it appears, bends, but does not break the rhythm of the dance. And this contrapuntal "torso", while worthy of Bach, is pure Chopin. Actually its most striking appearance is not at the beginning but at the top of the second page, just after the first noisy interruption has died down. Everything seems to be suspended for a moment, as the various melodic lines melt into one another, like oil; it is a moment of great mystery and beauty. (This passage recurs, of course, in its corresponding place at the return of the main theme.)

So much for the three great C Sharp Minor's. (There are two more in the same key, but they are less important.) Another Mazurka which deserves to stand besides these, the big B Minor and the B Flat Minor, is the F Sharp Minor, *Opus 59, No. 3*, which is also well-known. Unlike those others, however, it does not immediately strike the note of greatness. Its opening theme is charming but not unusual (and is one which can easily be made to sound sentimental, if badly played. Niedzielski's recording of it is excellent — with just the right snap). But soon the surprises begin. What makes this Mazur-

ka, more than anything else, is the soft, "thrumming-thrumming" passage that suddenly breaks in — twice near the middle and once, still more unexpectedly, just before the Coda. Here is the bitter-sweet, non-cloying Chopin of the Mazurkas *par excellence*! The form is interesting; most of the Mazurkas are in slightly-modified Minuet-and-Trio or Rondo form, but this is in neither. After the main theme in F Sharp Minor, there comes the usual major interlude which comes to an end in the "thrumming" passage. The main theme now comes back — but almost immediately leaves the rails; after this the music goes definitely queer, for more than a page — it is too rhapsodical to be called a "development section" — when suddenly back comes the thrumming passage; then a serene Coda, in the major, and all is over.

There is one more that belongs with the greater Mazurkas, a noble and neglected one — *Opus 56, No. 3 in C Minor*. It is a little on the severe side and is rather long, but it seems to me far superior to an earlier one in the same key, which is what people usually mean when they say "Mazurka in C Minor". Fortunately, this one has been recorded, and magnificently, by Rubinstein. It rises to great heights, especially in the warm, triumphant emotion of the middle B Flat section, and also in the concluding bars.

There are other superb ones, if none so fine as these. *Opus 33, No. 1 in G Sharp Minor* — a popular one though oddly enough not recorded — has a haunting middle section. *Opus 41, No. 2, in E Minor*, is a beautiful, plaintive little piece — Horowitz squeezes exactly the right amount of pathos out of those desperate D Sharps in the treble, halfway down the first page. *Opus 50, No. 1, in G*, has a cheerful theme — the end of which always reminds me of *Shallow Brown*, the sea-chantey — contrasting with some rather queer and impressive interludes. It is recorded by Niedzielski and (better) by Szpinalski. *Opus 63, No. 1, in B Major*, is a delightful specimen — superbly recorded

by Rubinstein. Till you get to the bottom of the first page, it seems quite ordinary; then it abruptly begins to move sideways, like a crab, through chromatic changes of key. The middle section contains another of Chopin's piquant alternations; an amusing figure that stamps its foot at you three times — in the minor, in the major, and in the minor again.

There are more fine Mazurkas, some of them famous, which I forebear to mention.

Chromatics, by the way, play a peculiar part in the Mazurkas. Since the days of Gesualdo da Venosa, chromatics have represented the touch of garlic in music; a little of them goes a long way and as we all know, they can become a dreadful effluvium in the hands of those that dearly love them, like César Franck. Chopin himself sometimes swamps you with them. But never in the Mazurkas — here the chromatics never cloy. Either he moves in "terrace-formation" — abruptly, from one perfectly clear-cut section to another, say, a semi-tone lower down — or else he uses his chromatics to *distort* a tune whose original outline still remains clear, thus making it pleasantly sour, not sweet. You never have that desire to dash into the clean outdoors of the diatonic scale.

A final word about recordings. Out of the grand total of 55 Mazurkas (not all of which are found in every printed edition) records have been made of 30. As this does not profess to be a comprehensive account, I shall not enumerate them all but will proceed with some general remarks and a few suggestions.

Two collections exist — those by Ignaz Friedman and Niedzielski. Between them, they dispose of 21, and they would dispose of more, but for seven exasperating overlaps. Both these sets are excellent. Niedzielski's readings are more "nervous" and attractive at first hearing. The most outstanding of those he does alone are *Opus 59, No. 3* — the great *F Sharp Minor* (there is another recording of this by Marguerite Long, but a dull one) — and *Opus 68, No. 4* — the deathbed one. The best of his overlaps with Friedman are *Opus 24, No. 4* and *Opus 33, No. 2*; both recordings of these famous Mazurkas are unexceptionable. Friedman sounds more stolid, but he grows on one. *Opus 24, No. 4* is perhaps his best; he seizes the poetry of that melancholy last page in a way that is second to none — not Niedzielski, nor Pachmann himself, who has also recorded it. His reading of *Opus 7, No. 3* (overlapping

with Horowitz) I have already praised. The best of those he does alone are the big *B Minor* from *Opus 33*, and the big *C Sharp Minor* from *Opus 41*. In the second of these he is beyond praise, but I wish he did not take the former quite so fast. It is a fault in the right direction, but the drama does demand that the dreamy ballroom strains contrast pretty sharply with the noisy interruptions. He has over-avoided being sentimental.

But good as these collections are, the pearls of great price are to be found outside them. Horowitz takes the palm with *Opus 30, No. 4*, but *Opus 41, No. 2* and *Opus 7, No. 3* are scarcely less perfect. His readings have an almost quivering sensitiveness. Rubinstein, for quality of choice and of playing combined, I put beside him; Rubinstein, who is more on the robust side — with *Opus 33, No. 2*, *Opus 56, No. 3* and *Opus 63, No. 1*. The great Pachmann and Paderewski have also made recordings, but — alas — their choice was not so good. However, there are two of theirs that I specially recommend: Pachmann's recording of an amusing one in *G Major, Opus 67, No. 1* — which he makes sound much better than it really is (it is a perfect "Pachmann number") — and Paderewski's playing of the much played and much recorded *Opus 33, No. 2*. This reading makes an interesting contrast with those of Rubinstein, Friedman, Niedzielski, etc.; they play it in almost strict time — Paderewski with a strong pause before the third beat, very much "à la Mazurka". Both ways sound equally good, with this particular number.

I have insisted on the perennial freshness of the Mazurkas. A sceptical person might say this was due to their neglect — anything sounds fresh if it is never played! But no — the skeptic is confusing cause with effect. It is not because the Mazurkas are seldom played that they sound fresh; it is because of their innate freshness — preserved in that bitter Polish fluid — that they are secure from the hands of the vulgar. Of all the people who torture us with the *G Minor Ballade* (a good piece, after all, but dead, dead for a ducat, dead) not one in a hundred tackles a Mazurka, except, occasionally, one from the small, hackneyed handful. There is no inducement to do so. They are difficult — often awkward technically and always a problem to interpret — and they sound easy. They do not abound in "effect".

(Continued on Page 60)

"Burn His History"

BEING SOME NOTES ON BURNEY AND HIS MUSICAL HISTORY

By WARREN D. ALLEN

THE year 1776 was eventful, not only in the annals of American history, but in the world of English literature. It was the year in which Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared, and it was also the year in which appeared the two most famous histories of music ever written in English, by Sir John Hawkins and Dr. Charles Burney. Hawkins was a learned magistrate who believed that music was worthy of more serious and scholarly attention than it had received hitherto. Burney was a practical musician, organist, wit, traveller, and amiable man of the world who regarded music as "an innocent luxury, unnecessary, indeed, to our existence, but a great improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing."

"That clever dog, Burney," as Dr. Johnson called him, won the admiration of the British public and the great popularity of his history consigned Hawkins' work to undeserved oblivion. A popular catch was even sung which went as follows:

"Have you Sir John Hawkins' history?
Some folks say it's quite a mystery.
Musick filled his wondrous brain,
How d'ye like him? Is it plain?
Both I've read and must agree
Burney's history pleases me."

When performed, the outstanding accents give this effect:

"Sir John Hawkins! Burn his History!
How d'ye like him? Burn his history!
Burney's history pleases me."

The result was that book-sellers, unable to dispose of Hawkins' bulky tomes, did actually burn them or let them mildew in damp basements. But towards the end of the 19th century Vincent Novello brought out a new and handsome edition of Hawkins, and Burney's four folio volumes became the rarity.

Now, after a lapse of one hundred and sixty years a new edition of Burney's work has been brought out. The four volumes are compressed, but without omissions, into two, with editorial notes by Frank Mercer.*

For the student of 18th century England, few books give a better idea of the artistic taste of that day than Burney's. The author

was a keen observer of the musical life of his time, having previously published two books on "The Present State of Music" in various countries. Burney reflected the prejudices and preference of his day without pausing to criticise them. Gothic "barbarity," and the Enlightenment Laws of Nature are facts. Such facts, in Burney's view, are not



CHARLES BURNEY

mere opinions and matters of taste; they are absolute criteria by which Music worthy of the name is to be judged. Folk-song is "wild", barbarous, "irregular," and unworthy of serious consideration. "Real music arises from a complete scale under the guidance of such rules of art as successful cultivation has rendered respectable and worthy of imitation." Elizabethan music was "uncouth", and the great 15th century masterpieces of Josquin and others are treated with condescension, as worthy beginnings in the art of music, considering the "primitive stage" of advancement reached by artists of that day. He even admits that Monteverdi's "violations of fun-

*Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, 2nd Edition; N. Y., Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1935.

damental rules and prohibitions" are "beyond my comprehension."

Truly, there has never been an age in which men have seemed more sure of themselves than in the Age of Enlightenment. Eighteenth-century faith, not only in Reason, but in the reasoned "laws" formulated in that day, has been communicated to succeeding generations. To the latter, these rational "rules" have seemed sacrosanct and impregnable, even when assailed by new evidence, new practices, and new conditions which reduce ancient "law" to historical "opinion."

The influence of Burney and Hawkins on English music-histories ever since has been incalculable. One need only look into the ubiquitous *Dictionary* of Sir George Grove, and note the recurrence of "according to Burney," "Hawkins relates the following anecdote," etc. And the latest American history of music, in a footnote, presents the theories of John Muris, a medieval theorist, by quoting Burney's account of Rousseau's comments on the original!

Burney's *History* is also invaluable to those who would like to trace back the origins of our Anglo-Saxon notion that imported music is somehow superior to the indigenous variety. In 1776, creative activity in English music was at an extremely low ebb. Italian supremacy was acknowledged in many spheres, notably in opera and vocal music generally. Handel-idolatry was at its height, having met, as yet, no such opposition as came from Mendelssohn and Brahms in the next century. Hawkins, loyal British magistrate, believed in the glories of England's own musical heritage. Burney, however, shared the popular view that music, even though regarded as a "private vice" by those interested in "more serious concerns", could become a "publick benefit" when imported and cultivated for innocent diversion. Burney frankly says that

"The ancient Romans had the fine arts and eminent artists from Greece; the modern Romans, in return, supply the rest of Europe with Painting, Sculpture and Music. *The last is a manufacture in Italy, that feeds and enriches a large portion of the people; and it is no more a disgrace to a mercantile country to import it than wine, tea, or any other product from remote parts of the world.*"

It must be noted, in this connection, that our young American nation was obliged, despite the *Declaration of Independence*, to depend upon importation of music from a "mercantile" mother-country that was also borrowing from abroad. Is it, then, any wonder that modern, "mercantile" America must still

import the Toscaninis, Gatti-Casazas, Molinaris, Hartys, Beechams, Melbas, et al. that are so indispensable to our musical life?

But although Hawkins was more just in his appraisal of old English music, Burney was more up-to-date, and gives, unlike his rival, some information concerning the "modern" music of that day. He praises the new symphonies appearing at that time in Germany—

"a new species of composition, at which there was an outcry, as usual, against innovation, by those who wish to keep music stationary But — the variety, taste, spirit and new effects produced by the control of *crescendo* and *dimuendo* . . . had been of more service to instrumental music in a few years than all the dull and servile imitations of Corelli, Geminiani, and Handel had been in a half-century."

Another innovation in music-history which Burney glimpsed, but which he himself failed to pursue, and few have pursued since, was in the concept of Music as merely one of many independent factors in the history of culture.

"Indeed it was my intention . . . to trace the genealogy of Music in a *right line*, without . . . meddling with the collateral branches of the family . . . I was unawares seduced into a course of reading and conjecture — by the chief subject of my enquiries being so extensively diffused through all the regions of literature, and all the ages of the world. I found ancient Music so intimately connected with Poetry, Mythology, Government, Manners and Science in general, that wholly to separate it from them, seemed to me like taking a single figure out of a group, in an historical picture; or a single character out of a drama. of which the propriety depends upon the dialogue and incidents. If, therefore, a number of figures appear in the back-ground, I hope they will give relief, and somewhat keep off the dryness and fatigue which a single subject in a long work, or a single figure, if often repeated, though in different points of view, is apt to produce."

Finally, Burney's *History* is a work that should be on all reading lists now for students of 18th century English Literature, along with Johnson, Boswell, Gibbon, Hume, and the rest. Skipping the prolix and inaccurate chapters on Greek and medieval theory, and keeping the salt handy for all dogmatic expressions of judgment, the reader can peruse these volumes with genuine pleasure. The summaries of old accounts of music among the Greeks are admirable, and interesting anecdotes are legion, related with the ready facility of a gifted raconteur. The author aimed, as he said, "to fill up . . . a chasm in English literature." That task he accomplished well.

A European Record Excursion

BEING SOME FOREIGN REVIEWS

By PETER HUGH REED

AMONG the European record lists of the past six months there are a number of works which are of salient interest and considerable worth; and which, because there seems little likelihood that they will be released in the near future by any domestic company, we believe, should be surveyed in *The American Music Lover*.

For our first *European Record Excursion*, we have chosen six works — two symphony recordings — Liszt's *Faust Symphony* and William Walton's "*First*" *Symphony*, two complete opera recordings — Gluck's *Orpheus* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* — a string orchestra work — Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis*, and Arthur Bliss' *Clarinet Quintet*. There are others, equally important, but — due to the fact — that we have not been able to hear them to date, we will concern ourselves with those which have engaged our attention.

A Faust Symphony

Liszt's *Faust Symphony*, recorded by Pathé in Paris, is most capably performed by the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Selmar Meyrowitz. This year, being the 125th anniversary of Liszt's birth (October 22nd, 1811), a movement is on foot throughout the musical world to honor that event. Already, the recording companies have taken cognizance of the fact and several Liszt works have been issued. The most important of these so far is the *Faust Symphony*. This work, founded on Goethe's famous poem, is a musical delineation of the three principal characters of the poem — Faust, Margaret and Mephistopheles. Liszt has written some of his most sincere and deeply felt music in this symphony. He has sought to analyze and expound the feelings and the interests of the various characters, but in so doing has somewhat hampered his symphony with a philosophical background which is not always clear or convincing. The characters, so thoughtfully and so skillfully drawn by Goethe, are on the whole only externally outlined by Liszt. The first movement marked Faust — "I am he who seeks" — is thematically intricate and involved, the second marked Margaret — "I am she who loves" — is the most

purely musical part of the work, the themes are tenderly romantic and more aptly chosen, and the third section marked Mephistopheles — "I am he who ever denies" — is the virtuoso Liszt — ingenious in its dramatic elements and thematic effects (the composer here has purposely distorted the themes of the first part), although hardly exploiting fully the sinister aspects of the character. The finale of this section, added several years after the work was written, extols the virtues of the eternal feminine and is a sort of apotheosis — making use of a tenor soloist and a chorus.

There is much that is fine in this work, much that can be appreciated, for this reason it is both a welcome and an important recording. The music of Liszt has been unnecessarily disparaged, and his true worth hidden under a lot of intolerant criticism. "Without pretending that he is a great master, or trying to make a cult of him, we can enjoy him," W. R. Anderson wrote recently in *The Gramophone*, "for his best qualities, not his worst, and so really 'appreciate' him — thinking of him, always as a heart divided, a mind knowing the tawdry from the true, but always hankering after both, wanting cheap applause and yet having high aspirations."

Walton's Symphony

William Walton is one of England's most gifted younger composers. He is largely self-taught, and has developed a harmonic language of his own, the dissonance and ambiguity of which he is fully in control. As one listens to his music, so strikingly forceful and alive, his dissonance does not protrude beyond the message of the music, nor impress one as being constructed purely for "effect", but rather as a logical outcome of his musical thought.

His "*First*" *Symphony*, (he calls it simply *Symphony*), is in four movements, three of which he finished and had performed in public before he added his fourth. Despite the fact that the work is over-long, it is a sincere and deeply-thoughtful one. It is modern in more than one sense, not alone because of its harmonic idiom, but also because of the tension and restless energy which prevails

throughout. The first movement has a curious orientalism in it, the sort of orientalism we mark in Borodin and Moussorgsky—more of an influence than an actual characteristic. The brooding spirit of the music also recalls Sibelius, but Walton is not derivative. The first movement could have profited with pruning, he reiterates and restates too often, as though he wished to drive home the aim and purpose which motivated it. Particularly is this true in the heart of the movement, in the outgrowth or development after the initial section. The sharpness of the rhythms of the scherzo stamps it as a modern product. This movement is marked *Presto con malizia* — why “malice” one can well question, for it is a quality which hardly belongs to music. There is an impatience in this movement — one wonders is it an impatience with life or with music — and a jerkiness which may be attributed to the marking or *vice versa*. The slow movement finds the composer digging deep, the dissonance continues but an aspect of romanticism is now in the music. It builds and achieves an impressive climax which one remembers, because its verity is unquestionable. The whole thing is worked out on broader phrases. Its keynote is in its marking — which says “with melancholy”. The last movement is the most impressive on first hearing, but we soon realize “that it lacks the feeling of the inevitable,” as one English critic has said, “and has no size other than that of its notes.” This section, like the others, contains some splendid writing, but it does not convince. “After the complete inner consistency of the other three movements,” writes Ernest Newman, “we cannot help feeling that Walton has been up against difficulties which he has not quite been able to surmount.”

This work, recorded by English Decca, is performed by the London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir Hamilton Harty. Both the performance and the recording are excellent.

Gluck's Orpheus

The phonograph being what it is — a purely auditory instrument — it becomes by virtue of several reasons both a sound and unsound medium (no pun intended) through which to listen to Gluck's *Orpheus*. In opera, via the phonograph, when the characters are not properly differentiated vocally the drama suffers a distinct loss of realism. For example — when a mezzo-soprano sings the role of Orpheus in an unvisualized performance, the drama is not convincing. Considering that the voice is the true delineator of character in

opera — the role of Orpheus via the phonograph should therefore have been sung by a man to create the right illusion. The reason for Orpheus being sung by a female voice has to do with the fact that Gluck wrote the part with a *castrati* singer in mind. The use of such de-personalized voices, in vogue when Gluck composed this score, was wisely disbanded by him in later operas. The part of Orpheus also was rearranged later for the tenor voice, but despite this fact the opera is performed more often, even in modern times, with a mezzo-soprano or a contralto in the title role.

The recording of the opera, made by Pathé in Paris, has the illustrious and opulent voiced Alice Raveau as Orpheus, Germaine Feraldy as Eurydice, and Jany Delille as Love. The performance — under the direction of M. Henri Tomasi — throughout is marked by fine singing and smooth ensemble, and the recording is life-like and free from distortion.

Purcell's Opera

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, recorded by English Decca, has for its main characters Nancy Evans as Dido, Mary Hamlin as Belinda, Roy Henderson as Aeneas and Mary Jarred as the Sorceress. The performance is under the direction of Hubert J. Foss.

The music of this opera is the important thing. Its libretto, which was typical of its day, is hardly an imposing piece of work and should not be taken too seriously. Despite the fact, that the opera was originally written for a school performance for girls, it is a significant work — the first and the greatest opera of Purcell. “It is a national classic,” says Edward J. Dent, “it is the oldest opera which holds the stage on its dramatic merits, not merely from its interest as a museum piece, and it is an opera which in spite of its venerable age can still command our emotions by the force and truth of its inspiration . . . but it is by no means easy to study in detail, for it requires minute accuracy and concentrated intelligence.”

Mr. Dent has said that “there is hardly ever a model performance available” of *Dido and Aeneas*, and has spoken of the value of having the whole opera recorded. The recorded version of *Dido and Aeneas* should have been the “model performance,” but unfortunately it is not. Miss Evans, as the heroine, has assumed a task for which, in our estimation, she was ill equipped, and Miss Hamlin is hardly much better. Mr. Henderson brings dignity to the role of Aeneas and a fine voice, but his diction is not good. The

(Continued on Page 46)

Neglected Masterpieces on Records

By J. M. HOWARD

1.

THE past two years have seen a decided advancement in the art of recording music. Recording has developed a so-called "higher-fidelity" technique to the point where now a symphony interpreted by a major American orchestra can scarcely be bettered in its own concert hall. With the introduction of Balakiref's *Russia* from English Recording Studios a new technique raised the standards of recording to a higher level.

The symphonic poem *Russia* by Balakiref is one of those items of worth which seldom receives its just dues in the concert hall. While hardly a masterpiece, it is first rate music by an important national composer of Russia. It is based on themes from Russian folk songs and was composed to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of an independent Russian nation.

2.

One of the greatest advantages of owning a phonograph and a good record library is that we are enabled to hear repeatedly unusual music — music for which we would wait years before our local symphony orchestra included it on one of its programs. Even then there might be a variety of reasons why we could not attend on that particular evening. But the phonograph allows us to sit in our most comfortable easy-chair, any hour of the day or night (providing the neighbors don't object), and present to ourselves the particular music that suits our mood.

If we are tired for the moment of hearing Beethoven's *Fifth*, dispensed by every group of musicians from symphony to horn quartet, we may shut off that portion of our beloved Sunday afternoon radio concert and substitute an even better reproduced composition on phonograph records. The radio, it is true, has greatly widened our chances to hear good music, but it still does not allow us to choose.

It is as if a blind man were to have no control over what books were read aloud to him, so that some great books were read over and over until he never wanted to hear them again. He may shut his ears if he does not care to listen, but that is the extent of his control. This situa-

tion is no more barbaric than one in which a lover of fine music is limited to the concert hall and radio. In such case he grows overly familiar with the most popular music and remains oblivious to much in music which is of the best but rarely heard. Music is equally as fine an art as literature; therefore it should be as readily available.

The music lover who possesses a collection of phonograph records may entertain himself with as great a variety of composers and compositions as his money affords, and it is a growing beauty, constantly affording him new joys as he is able to add another longed-for item to its good company.

3.

There are two reasons why certain masterpieces are not ordinarily presented at concerts: (1) they are either too costly to produce, involving auxiliary features not a part of the standard musical groups' apparatus; or (2) they are not popular for one or another reasons. Of the unpopular class there are two general types, the ultra-modern variety of music and the supposedly out-dated music.

Most people of musical discernment are agreed that modern music should be heard much and often. From the composer's standpoint it is, of course, necessary that he be played and heard, for that is the purpose of his writing. Naturally it is somewhat discouraging to hope that a future generation will applaud what his own people have misunderstood or rejected, and that future conductors will welcome his compositions, whereas in his own day they will not give him a hearing. But the conductor has no personal objections. He is not reactionary, and very likely wants to help the young composer. But he owes his position to an audience which he can best please by repetitions of the classics. His hands are tied.

The record companies, however, are well aware that modern music has its public, and they have seen to it that worthwhile modern compositions are becoming increasingly available on discs. By this route the legitimate young artist gains a wider public than ever heard the first compositions of Beethoven or Brahms, and his

work is presented by top-notch artists under recording conditions which preserve most of the music's "reality."

From the listener's standpoint too there is much called "ultra-modern" which has real artistic value and is capable of oft-repeated hearings. There are good reasons besides the sufficient one of the music's worth why we should educate our ears and control our prejudices toward modern music. As many critics have pointed out, the music of one's own generation is conceived in the spirit of that generation and for its people. In the future it can never again be quite as pertinent and appropriate. If we do not appreciate the best that our composers are doing then we are lagging behind the times and shutting our ears against much that is beautiful.

Such a composition as the *Quintet for Piano and Strings* by Ernest Bloch is nothing short of a masterpiece of chamber music, yet because of the exigencies of the music and, at first glance, its repellent harshness it remained unknown to the casual listener until Victor brought it out well over a year ago, magnificently played by Alfredo Casella and the Pro Arte Quartet. This is music which grows more precious as one hears it, containing in essence the haunting sadness and the restless seeking of the Israelites, a mysterious quality which only Ernest Bloch seems to capture and which runs through all his music, such as the better known *Schelomo* (This work should be on records.—Ed.)

Even less frequently heard is Bartók's *Quartet in A Minor* recently issued in a special list by Victor. Chamber music at best is restricted in its outlets to the general public, and even the most classic examples sound strange to ears attuned to symphony music. However, the public for modern chamber music is bound to grow with the release of such sets as the Bartók *Quartet*. Bartók is unquestionably in the foremost rank of living composers, and this, his first quartet, shows a mastery far beyond the opus number.

The death of Charles Tomlinson Griffes in 1920 at the age of thirty-six robbed American music of perhaps its most gifted composer. One year before that (1919) the Boston Symphony gave the world premiere of his fine orchestral composition, *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Kahn*. This composition, based on Coleridge's poem, is gradually attaining prominence on or-

chestral programs, but not as much prominence as it deserves, for in the opinion of competent judges it is music fit to rank with the best of the past. For sheer programmatic suggestiveness I know of nothing short of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* to compare. The thin icy touch of the piano as the music runs through "caves of ice" to its close has not failed to send a cold chill up my spine; whereas only a moment before the great marching rhythm of "Alph, the sacred river," has sent the blood surging with a sense of space and power. I believe the growing importance of this composition on orchestral programs can largely be traced to the popularity of its fine recording made by Ormandy and the Minneapolis Symphony.

The *First Symphony* of Dmitri Szostakowicz is another example of how the phonograph is propagating the best of our modern music. Several years ago I heard the composition for the first time on a radio broadcast from Philadelphia, Stokowski conducting. And save for Stokowski's interest in the young Russian the opportunity of hearing his music would be scant indeed. Even so, were it not for the recording of his *First Symphony*, his audience in this country would likely be restricted to the Philadelphia concert-goers.

The work of such British composers of high talent as Delius and Elgar would receive scant recognition in this country — save for their best known but not necessarily best works — were it not for the ambitious efforts of the major recording companies. The same is true of three Frenchmen: Chausson, Fauré and Vincent D'Indy. A good representation of all these composers is available on records, and some of their work deserves rating as masterpieces.

4.

In the class of supposedly out-dated or music of a forgotten day, which is all too rarely heard in public, there is a great wealth of beauty we should probably be unaware of except for the phonograph's explorations. At first hearing the work of geniuses like Vittoria, Byrd, Gesualdo, Lassus, Palestrina, and Monteverde might seem to us thin and dull. This impression, however, rapidly disintegrates as we accustom ourselves to the conventions of the day when these men composed. And the effort of accommodating our ears and minds is well worth while, because these great composers, while *limited* by the

musical resources of their times, were men of noble spirit who had a great deal to say which is of interest to music lovers of all ages.

There are difficulties in the proper presentation of the music of these composers, aside from its seeming austerity. In order to render such works, for example, as the Marcello *Sonata in G Minor* as it was written it is necessary to employ a *viola da gamba* and a harpsichord, both of which are obsolete so far as standard equipment is concerned. The playing of them requires specialized study by the few musicians who are interested, and good performers are very scarce. Such an organization is the *American Society of Ancient Instruments*. The recordings of these musicians and others, namely the Dolmetsch Group and *La Societe des Instruments Anciens* are contributing a great deal in making known to music lovers masterworks of ancient composers which otherwise would be lost beneath the dust of centuries.

Much music by Bach, Handel and Mozart would be lost to view but for the treasures of grooved discs. How many of us, for instance, could hear the tremendous *Art of the Fugue* by Bach had Columbia not been altruistic enough to issue it last March? Practically its only contact up until then with the students of music who studied it for form. But it is a composition worthy of wider audiences, and promises enjoyment from the standpoint of the simple auditor as well as to him who understands the intricacies of fugal development. Some musical commentators have even gone so far as to call it Bach's greatest work.

Again, take for example the Mozart *Quartet in G Minor*, a composition of the first order undoubtedly presented on Victor records better than most people would ever hear it at a recital of chamber music, if they were fortunate enough to hear it at all: Artur Schnabel at the piano and members of the Pro Arte Quartet.

The world is enriched by the phonographic advancement of these enduring works into the realm of familiar music.

5.

The great music which is seldom heard at concerts because of its elaborate demands of instruments and performers finds also its justification in the phonograph record. Great choral works require an organization that can be assembled only at large cost, and are performed infrequently

for this reason and because the repertory is more limited than that of the orchestra. Sets like that made by the Choir of the Dijon Cathedral, issued in July of last year, bring this music to our armchair as often as we care to hear it. Bach's *B Minor Mass* and his *St. Matthew Passion*, and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* are now other cases in point.

Mahler is only a name* to some of us, or was before the Minneapolis Symphony recorded his *Second Symphony*. We were obliged to take the word of certain commentators, who should know better, who called him dull and tedious. The recording made obvious the reason why this symphony is so little heard. It was not because of its dullness, for it is tremendously alive and potent, but because its presentation required in addition to a symphony orchestra, a grand organ, a set of church bells, and an enormous chorus. The recording brings out all the majesty of this work and establishes Mahler as a composer whom we should like to hear a great deal more of.

There are many more compositions which have not appeared on the standard repertory of symphony and chamber orchestras for so many years that suddenly to resurrect them might bring down upon the conductor a charge of eccentricity. The phonograph is unafraid of such a charge, and its public is eager for neglected aspects of the past as well as the very young music of the present.

For example, Verdi in the minds of the concert and opera-goer is restricted solely to the melodic Italian opera; but the phonograph listener is perhaps aware that in May, 1935, HMV released his string quartet, a work which makes us readjust our opinions of him and place him among the masters of ensemble music. (Recently, Toscanini played in concert three movements of this quartet in an arrangement for strings on a Philharmonic program.—Ed.)

Thus the phonograph, unrestricted by time and space, brings to us a wider universe of music, making equally available to music lovers the great Bach-Stokowski transcriptions and the Beethoven sonatas played by Schnabel, a chaconne by Purcell, a ballet by Prokofieff, a mass by Palestrina, and a modern work like the *Symphony of the Psalms* by Stravinsky. In this variety and scope and appeal, it seems to me, lies the phonograph's great contribution to the art of music.

(Continued from Page 42)

spirit of the work, however, is caught and conveyed, and if one is interested in making a study of the score or becoming better acquainted with Purcell's dramatic genius, he will find these records both valuable and helpful.

Vaughan Williams' Fantasia

Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis*, recorded by English Decca, is excellently played by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra under Mr. Neel. This is a most welcome recording. Vaughan Williams, who has some of the best qualities — as one English reviewer has stated — of their native art, has been shamefully neglected by recording companies. His *London Symphony* and his *Pastoral Symphony* are long overdue. Tallis, from whom the composer borrowed his theme, was a distinguished English 16th century church composer. Vaughan Williams has retained the modal beauties of church music in this work, and given us a varied and skillful fantasy on them. For those who believe all music should be harmonized in the traditional tonic, sub-dominant, dominant and tonic style, this music will not appeal; for Vaughan Williams does not follow such traditions. One critic has aptly stated that this work might be termed "a fantasia on the common chord in root position," for it is constantly used and reused — first in major and then minor *ad libitum*.

Bliss' Quintet

Arthur Bliss, who started out after the World War to be an English Stravinsky, has done an about face, and probed more deeply, than in his early music, beneath the surface of things. His *Clarinet Quintet* is a beautifully conceived, deeply thoughtful, and skillfully executed composition; one that stands up most favorable beside the similar quintets that Mozart and Brahms wrote. It is essentially a modern work in its harmonic texture and shifting tonalities, but it is not modern in the sense that it is harsh or repellent. As a matter of fact, the whole work is filled with beauty of sound — as though the composer believed the clarinet and strings could not produce anything else. At the same time, it is not sentimental — but eloquent with an emotional depth which is both searching and revealing. One feels, after several hearings, that Bliss was genuinely inspired when he wrote this music. The quintet is comprehensively performed by the Griller String Quartet and Frederic Thurston, and issued by English Decca.

RARE COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

Otello: Willow Song (Verdi); sung by Aino Ackté. IRCC No. 71 — \$2.00.

Gretchen am Spinnrade (Schubert) and (a) *Si tu le veux* (Koechlin)

(b) *Chérubin: Aubade* (Massenet); sung by Emma Eames. IRCC No. 76 — \$2.25.

Don Pasquale: Bella sicome (Donizetti) and *Ballo in Maschera: Alla vita* (Verdi); sung by Antonio Scotti. (Memorial Edition). IRCC No. 75 — \$2.00.

Reine de Saba; Plus grand (Gounod) and *Paul et Virginie: Air de Tigre* (Massé); sung by Jeanne Gerville-Reache.

"... not only is *Gretchen am Spinnrade* Eames' finest record, but I consider it the finest version of this song on records... Gerville-Reache was the greatest contralto voice of the century... her *Air de Tigre* is a veritable lesson in singing."

—Peter Hugh Reed in *Musical America*

Music lovers interested in historical recordings write us regarding your interests. If you are not on our mailing list — send us your name immediately so we can mail you our Monthly Bulletin.

INTERNATIONAL RECORD COLLECTOR'S CLUB

318 Reservoir Ave., Bridgeport, Conn.

Gregorian Chant Discography

McLaughlin & Reilly Co., Boston, Mass., have issued in pamphlet form (price 50 cents) the series of articles which appeared during 1935 in their Magazine of Church and School Music — known as *The Caecilia*, written by Dom Adélarde Bouvilliers of Cathedral Abbey, Belmont, North Carolina on Gregorian Chant. In these articles, Father Adélarde has performed largely a labor of love for those interested in Gregorian Chant — reviewing some 143 records of Gregorian Chant (the amount issued to date) from ten recording companies in Europe and America.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

The Metropolitan Opera — 1883-1935, by Irving Kolodin. Oxford University Press.

Predicaments or Music and the Future, by Cecil Gray. Oxford University Press.

Down Among the Dead Men, by Bernard Van Dieren. Oxford University Press.

Correspondence . . .

A TEACHER WRITES

Editors of The American Music Lover,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

I want to congratulate you on your fine magazine. I have every issue of the past year and am eagerly looking forward to each coming issue. Your reviews are not only helpful but instructive as well. I am a piano teacher and use the records to stimulate desire for greater musical knowledge in my pupils. You would be surprised to see the effects it has on them. Often I read the articles from your magazine to them, thus adding more to their interest. Some of them became so interested that they now have a few records of their own.

Occasionally I give "Record Concerts," which are very popular with students. Many times I play the concertos along with the records — this being a most beneficial practice for myself. I have learned much from Schnabel's Beethoven Sonata recordings. As a result, I find all my pupils with a high taste and a most critical knowledge of the difference between a good and poor performance and interpretation of music. I earnestly believe that if teachers would take this suggestion and start record collections, there would be fewer failures. For, as we all know, the child mind requires novelty to keep interest alive.

Before I close, again may I express my appreciation of *The American Music Lover* which is a record collector's feast of knowledge.

ALONZO J. HANAGAN.

Lockport, N. Y. March 9, 1936.

* * * *

A CHICAGO RECORD CLUB

American Music Lover,
12 East 22nd Street,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

The "Disc and Needle" Club of Chicago has been organized for over two years and meets once a month on Fridays. Members and guests gather to enjoy programs of symphonic recordings. Refreshments after a short business meeting follow. Members may borrow records for their own enjoyment for a period of one month. We have been a subscriber to your magazine and find it very helpful in the selection of new recordings.

Inquiries concerning the activities of the club, addressed to the Secretary, will receive prompt attention.

Yours truly,

PAUL R. DUCK, Sec.

539 N. Homan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

May 7, 1936.

* * * *

FROM SALESLADY TO VAN

The American Music Lover,
12 East 22nd Street
New York, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I, too, wish to extend my congratulations on your very fine musical magazine and assure you that your reviews on both classical, ballroom dance, and hot jazz records have been very helpful.

"Van," in your review of Wilson's Brunswick recording of *All My Life* you make mention of Ella Fitzgerald — further stating that as far as you knew she hasn't recorded previously (refer to Decca 640, Chick Webb, on which she "takes off" beautifully) and then you say she is "one of the several hundred singers who are imitating, whether consciously or not, the vocal method of Billie Halliday" — let me, as a record saleswoman, say that if Miss Halliday would only turn out as good recordings as Miss Fitzgerald, we might sell more of Wilson's recordings with her choruses, thus suggesting that Miss Halliday listen to Miss Fitzgerald for a while.

I certainly like your column and sincerely hope we may have more of it and in lengthier vein.

Yours very truly,

PAULINE WARD.

Record Dept.

McCoys—"The House of Music."

Hartford, Conn. May 14, 1936.

* * * *

Peter Hugh Reed, Editor
12 East 22nd Street
New York, N. Y.

My Dear Sir:—

I am enclosing postal money order for my subscription renewal to your very interesting publication and I wish to urge upon you to kindly use your good offices to secure the release by RCA Victor of the Heifetz recording of Saint-Saens' *Introduction and*

(Continued on Page 64)

Toscanini is with us again on VICTOR RECORDS

TOSCANINI is with us again — and forevermore! Although he sailed for Europe early in May, his new Victor Higher Fidelity Records give an account of his peerless art that is as vital and stirring as the man himself. The same careful attention to detail, the same modesty and self-effacement that inject no more, nor less, into the score than the composer intended . . . the **same inspiration** that distinguishes Toscanini's performances from those of any other conductor are evident in his new Victor records

RCA Victor is happy and proud to have broken the maestro's seven-year silence, and to have recorded a number of compositions outstanding in his repertoire. The earliest release of these are the five double-faced 12-inch records in the album set M-308 — Toscanini's Wagner . . . music of such tremendous scope that repeated listening alone can provide the means of fullest understanding.



RCA Victor Division
RCA Mfg. Co., Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

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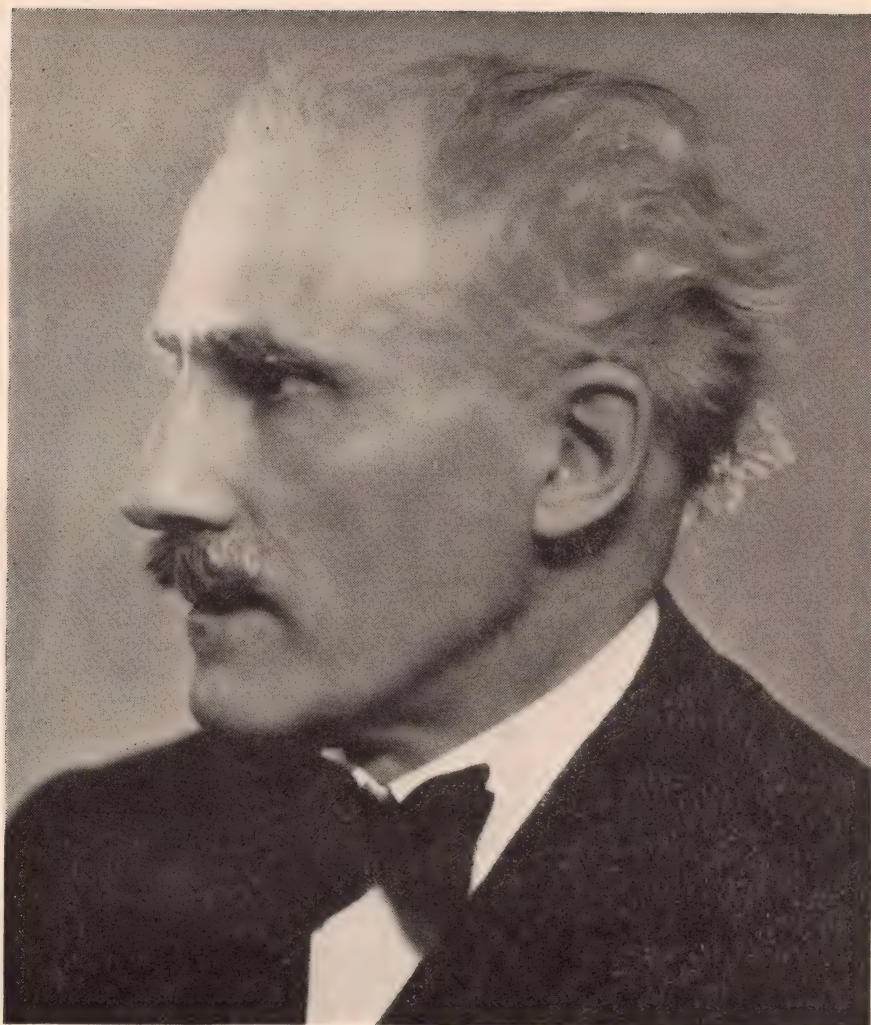


Photo by Renato Toppo

You will thrill to the amazingly beautiful recording of this glorious music. First there is the mystery, the magic of the **Grail** theme that pervades the **Prelude to Act One** from Lohengrin. Then comes the pomp and ceremony of the **Prelude to Act Three** from the same opera. Next, **Dawn** and the **Rhine Journey** from Goetterdaemmerung, linked by a portion of the love duo by Siegfried and Bruennhilde, which is Toscanini's own orchestral arrangement. And finally there is the exquisitely tender **Siegfried Idyll**.

Imagine what it will mean to you and to future generations to be able to hear whenever you wish, the music of this universally great composer interpreted by one of the most famous conductors of all times — a combination available only on Victor Records.

Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: A. P. De Weese, Paul Girard, William Kozlenko,

Philip Miller, Peter Hugh Reed

ORCHESTRAL

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 4 in G Major*, played by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Václav Talich. Five records, Victor album No. 304, price \$7.50.

THERE are composers, such as Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Verdi and Dvorak, from whom we expect little else but imperishable music; there are others, however, like Bach, Beethoven and Wagner, from whom we expect not only music but a system of philosophy as well. But, by no stretch of the imagination, can we accept Dvorak as a musical philosopher, except, perhaps, if we agree to define his philosophy as an attitude and a predilection for the simple things in life, a sturdy love for nature. If this be a facet of philosophy, then let us make the most of it, but cosmic problems and metaphysical subjects were as foreign to Dvorak as they were to Mozart and Schubert. Dvorak found his deepest, his most articulate expression, in translating the simple yet poignant emotions of life into music. He never lost the earthy smell, the wild look in his eyes, the odor of wind and hay in his hair, even though he later became something of a cosmopolite, a man of the world. His music is most exhilarating, most real, when he limns the joyous dances, the melancholy songs, the happy whimsies, of a humble folk. It is in this sphere that we find the intrinsic Dvorak: the folk-poet unsullied by academicism, the incorrigible representative of the earthborn. But when he steps outside the boundary of his simple pattern of life, when he tries to become heroic, mystical, and philosophical — worrying his naive mind over involved problems of mankind — it is then that he becomes repetitious and stammers, then that his homely dialect becomes inflated with pompous cadences. In fine, it was not given to Anton Dvorak to ponder abstractions, though, like a humble peasant, he strived for the amorphous glory of the intellectual; and it is amusing to us now to recall how proud

he was in being addressed as Dr. Dvorak! Dr. Dvorak, indeed! A rustic lost in the wilderness of a lecture-hall. A skull-cap on a vagabond.

But his real, homespun art is to be found in his *Slavonic Dances*, in certain movements of his *Symphonies*, in his *songs* and *operas*. These, indeed, are worth a warehouse of *St. Ludmillas* and *Helenlieds*. He wanted to be glorified as a musical Plato when nature intended him to be a Pan. His amazing genius as a craftsman, his adroitness as a technician and, chiefly, his preponderant feeling as an emotionalist, saves much of his art from being mere skillful essays in orchestration. (Prout, in his two treatises on instrumentation, always speaks of Dvorak as "the greatest living master of scoring", and Donald Tovey confirms it by saying "there is no page of Dvorak's orchestration which does not instantly carry conviction as eminently brilliant and orchestral.")

Yet, almost all of Dvorak's large works suffer from a certain, though periodic, impuissance, an inconsistency of thematic development. We have come to expect it from his art; but, despite this lack of discipline, his music is so alive, so rich and scintillating, so full of fresh things, that we do not even consider his weaknesses when we are so overwhelmed by his strength. And certainly his *G Major Symphony*, so idyllic in content, must be considered one of his really inspirational works. It is not as imposing as the Fifth (*Symphony from The New World*), but what it lacks in size it makes up in concision and lyricism. The first two movements are the weakest, but the third and last movements are typical of Dvorak's genius for color and rhythm. There are, in fact, few pages in romantic music to compare with the proud opening of the *Finale*, with its subsequent series of poetic variations and its idyllic melodies.

The *G Major Symphony* was composed by Dvorak in 1889 — a rich musical year for the writer — and was conducted by him in

England in 1890, and again in 1891, when he received the degree of Doctor of Music. It is frequently called the "English Symphony" because of its popularity in that country, and I, for one, cannot understand why it is not performed more frequently in America.

Both the conductor, Václav Talich, and the Czech Philharmonic must be commended for their extraordinary fine presentation. The Czech Orchestra is an organization which ranks with the foremost in Europe and Conductor Talich is a man of extraordinary ability and musicianship. It would be superfluous to say more than the recording and the performance are of the highest standards.

—W. K.

* * * *

HANDEL: *Largo* (from *Xerxes*); and MEYERBEER: *Coronation march* (from *Le prophète*); played by the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, direction of Sir Dan Godfrey. Columbia disc, No. 7331-M, price \$1.25.

CERTAINLY the most popular piece of music ever written must be Handel's *Largo*. There can hardly be a person who does not know it, nor an instrument which has not played it in all the civilized world. Yet with all the tortures to which it has been subjected, it remains one of the world's grandest tunes. And how beautiful it can be when sung in the original Italian version by a genuine artist. It is not a hymn of faith, nor yet a prayer — it has no religious significance. It is simply a song of gratitude sung by a hot and weary man, addressed to the tree which offers him shade. But there are many to whom such a version as here presented will have a greater appeal. Sir Dan Godfrey and his noted Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra present the noble melody complete with organ, harp and violin solo. This is not, after all, the air *Ombra mai fu*, but Handel's *Largo*. It will find its public!

And that same public will be pleased with the coupling. The grand coronation scene from *Le Phrophète* is Meyerbeer at his most Meyerbeerian — in a veritable field-day of pomp and pageantry. The standard recording of the march has for years been the one made by Mengelberg for Victor. Dating back to the days when a booming bass was a featured novelty, that record has the inevitable fault. Sir Dan and the Columbia recorders have, naturally, achieved a better balance, but we miss Mengelberg's gift for making this sort of thing sound better than it is.

—P. M.

MENDELSSOHN: *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* (3 parts); and *Wedding March*; played by Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler. Two Victor discs, Nos. 11919-20, price \$3.00.

IT always seems an incredible tale that Mendelssohn composed his *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* at the age of 17. For the music is as vital and ingenious as anything he ever wrote. Mendelssohn was of course a musical prodigy — a precocity. His memory from an early age upward and his improvisatory powers were equally prodigious. In line with this — is the story told regarding the loss of the conductor's score of this overture, when he was visiting England in his 21st year. The score, it seems, was left in a cab. Unable to locate it, Mendelssohn, unperturbed by the incident, set about to rewrite it from memory, and upon completing his task it was found that the rewritten score was in perfect accord with the orchestral parts.

Time does not seem to have dimmed the vitality or sparkle of this music — even though it is a century and a decade in age. Mendelssohn wrote this overture as a musical delineation of Shakespeare's comedy for the concert hall. His incidental music to the play — of which *The Wedding March* is a part — was not composed until 17 years later.

As a recording, this version of the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* has no rival. It is brilliant, tonally opulent and most realistic in its projection of the composer's skillful instrumentation. As an interpretation, it is however a different story. Fiedler's elves are certainly more sure-footed, substantial folk than we usually accredit such creatures with being. He does not realize the fantastic element — for example — nor the delicate, tiptoe nuances that Furtwaengler achieved in his recording; at the same time — he does not permit the music to lag or loose in vitality. One suspects Mr. Fiedler is a realist, who finds it somewhat difficult to believe in fairy-folk for which, it is probable, very few people will chide him.

—P. G.

* * * *

RESPIGHI: *The Pines of Rome*, played by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, direction of Piero Coppola. Two Victor discs, Nos. 11917, 11918, price \$3.00.

THE recent death of Ottorino Respighi took from us one of the ablest craftsmen of modern music. As a tribute to his memory,

*The authenticity of this incident has been questioned. (See latest Grove's.) — Editor.

Victor makes this release of the work by which he is best known to us. And, although made in France and under other auspices, the discs have another significance for us Americans — as the work has been so intimately associated here with the name of Arturo Toscanini, who has just bid us what may be his final farewell. One might go even further, and say that the recording is important as the first adequate gramophonic version of the first symphonic work to make use of a gramophone record in its scoring.

I pini di Roma was written in 1924 as a companion-piece to Respighi's earlier symphonic poem, *Le fontane di Roma*, and, in turn, was followed by another work inspired by the church windows in the Eternal City. The composer himself has told us that, whereas in *The Fountains of Rome* he "sought to reproduce by means of tone an impression of Nature, in *The Pines of Rome* he uses Nature as a point of departure in order to recall memories and visions."

The work is in four sections (which do not, incidentally, divide evenly between the four record sides, as the labels lead us to expect). The first movement, called *The pines of the Villa Borghese*, depicts the merry games of children in the pine grove. They dance and play at soldiers, laughing and shouting their excitement. Next we are taken to *The pines near a catacomb*. Out of the depths of the vault rises a chant in the old Aeolian mode, sung by the low strings and wind. The third movement, *The pines of the Janiculum*, is a moonlight scene on a pine-covered hill-side. It is here that Respighi uses the phonograph recording of the actual song of the nightingale. Finally we see *The pines of the Appian Way*, at dawn. The movement takes the form of a march, a memory of a glorious past, rising steadily from a distant pianissimo to an impressive, powerful close.

There can be no doubt that the popularity of this work has been, in some measure at least, enhanced by the novel use of the recorded nightingale. This feature has called forth much praise as well as some facetious criticism. Whether or not the device is an artistic success, it has served to call popular attention to a work which is melodious, well-made and brilliantly orchestrated. In this recording the bird seems not altogether happy, as he seems quite definitely to be singing in a box. His part is brief, however, and the performance in other respects is a competent one. If other conductors have made the final march more thrilling, Coppola certainly does

not allow our interest to lag. There were two earlier recordings of the work, both now pretty well outdated. There may still be some who will prefer Panizza's reading as recorded by Italian Odeon, but the brilliance of the new reproduction will weigh against it.

—P. M.

* * * *

STRAUSS: Johann and Josef: *Pizzicato Polka*; and DRIGO: *Valse Bluette* (arr. Auer); played by The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction of Eugene Ormandy. Victor disc, No. 1757, 10-inch, price \$1.50.

RECENT releases of the Minneapolis Symphony and Boston "Pops" Orchestras look very much like a reversion to the old "semi-classical" repertoire of acoustical days. The record-buying public, as we all know, has undergone a complete change since then, and the companies have catered to the demand for heavier fare. Perhaps such a disc as this one is intended to lure back from the radio some of the less serious collectors of a few years ago. Perhaps, too, it is given us as an example of what a first-rate orchestra can do with light music. Again perhaps it is a kind of hang-over from Mr. Ormandy's theatre-orchestra days.

In any case, the Drigo piece is unimportant enough. It is a little surprising to find Auer's name given as the arranger. One suspects that there should be a third name between the parentheses.

The *Pizzicato Polka* is interesting chiefly as the combined work of two gifted Strausses. Unfortunately it is not a waltz. Though fully as characteristic of its period as the famous waltzes, it presents a less charmingly graceful aspect.

The playing and recording are all that anyone could ask.

—P. M.

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WAGNER: *Lohengrin*, *Prelude*, and *Prelude to Act 3* (three sides); *Die Goetterdaemmerung*, *Dawn* and *Rhine Journey* (three sides); *Siegfried Idyll* (four sides), played by N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, direction Arturo Toscanini. Victor set M-308, five discs, price \$10.00.

TOSCANINI, who has steadfastly refused to record for the past seven years, was finally induced to make a series of recordings before his retirement with the N. Y. Philharmonic Orchestra. Thus, we have his

extraordinary interpretive artistry as music lovers of today have so long known and admired it, in conjunction with the American organization which he helped shape into one of the most distinguished of its kind — admirably preserved for posterity. It is fitting tribute to Toscanini and to the N. Y. Philharmonic that these recordings have been taken by Victor. Besides the Wagnerian excerpts listed above, we are happy to state, that the eminent Italian maestro also recorded Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*, Brahms' *Variations on a Theme of Haydn*, and two Rossini overtures. The list, although not a very imposing one in the sense of bigness, is nonetheless an important one. Omissions may be justly lamented, but appreciation for what has been accomplished will undoubtedly outweigh all lamentations.

Perhaps the most salient part of this list are the Wagnerian excerpts, which Victor has wisely brought forward first. Toscanini's Wagner is singularly free from emotional eroticism and false sentiment. The music is brought to life with irrefutable verity and enthusiasm; it is clearly and eloquently voiced with infinite care and superb precision, as regards line, tonal balance and dynamics. He seems to infuse it with new vigor, with new vitality — and even with new meaning. To dwell on the individual selections here would be, we believe, to write superfluous copy, for the significance and meaning of the music is all too well known.

Only the *Rhine Journey*, as Toscanini has recorded it, needs special commendation, for the version he uses is not the familiar one, made by Humperdinck that we have on records at the present time. Toscanini has made his own arrangement, which begins with the Dawn music, progresses with seventy measures of the music which announces the lovers, then to the passage accompanying Brunnhilde's "O heilige Goetter" and the subsequent love-duet up to the climax, and then to the *Rhine Journey* proper. The ending he uses is Humperdinck's. This arrangement has been critically praised too often, since he first introduced it a number of years ago, to strive to amend that praise here; let us instead simply say that we are grateful that it has been recorded.

From the mechanical angle these recordings are not flawless — but what recordings are! Toscanini's aversion to recording was based partly upon the fact that he resented breaking a performance to facilitate the breaks which are necessary in present-day

recording. Hence, recording had to be done while the maestro played a straight, uninterrupted performance, and the breaks arranged by the recording engineers. The result is these breaks are not at all times too happily devised, and the empty sequence of grooves on the reverse face of the records are somewhat disconcerting. Of course, one can ascertain just where the music begins where this occurs and run a red pencil across the record to within a line or two of the music and thereafter set the needle down so as appropriately to reduce the time between the sides. The actual recording, however, is very brilliant, and truly remarkable in its reproducing rectitude where Toscanini's miraculous nuances and superb dynamics are concerned.

—P. H. R.

CONCERTO

ELGAR: *Concerto in E Minor for Cello and Orchestra, Opus 85*; played by W. H. Squire and the Hallé Orchestra, direction Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia set No. 247, four discs, price \$6.00.

ELGAR was deeply affected by the World War, and his compositions dating from the latter part of that period exhibit an emotional restraint and a conciseness, which assuredly must be accredited to his mental and emotional reactions to same. Seemingly, he was striving to probe deeper — to establish a more profound feeling at this time — like a gardener seeking to unearth the farthest reaching roots. Particularly is this true in his *String Quartet, Opus 83*, and his *Cello Concerto, Opus 85*. For here we find a decidedly new Elgar evincing himself in a more reflective manner. These two works, like the *Violin and Piano Sonata, Opus 82*, were first produced in 1919. In the *String Quartet* and the *Cello Concerto*, more so than in the *Sonata*, however, we find the composer employing an economy of means, realizing a more consistent expressive subtlety, and evincing a dexterity in handling his material which is most interesting.

The *Cello Concerto* has long been one of the writer's favorite Elgar works, because beneath its seemingly austere outline there is an expressiveness both varied and resourceful, and a fine poetic feeling in line and phrase, particularly in the last two movements. The first movement has some affinity with the *Sonata* for it is more lyrical than the other three. The second movement, intended as a scherzo, is more of a soliloquy

for the cello. It is a typically Elgarian movement, one of those that are best listened to with the eye as well as the ear. The slow movement has nobility. It is songful, and exploits the solo instrument for its most poetic qualities.

The *Cello Concerto* has pride and strength in its music and true poetic nobility. The last movement is a particularly telling one, in which the poetic element is built up somewhat strangely for Elgar, since an almost Wagnerian emotionalism is evidenced in the latter half (end of side seven and onto side eight), for here we have a suggestion of Tristan. The lifted sixth in the music gives, of course, the impression, yet the mood too is similar. This mood we are given to understand is reminiscent at the same time of the composer's "Dream of Gerontius."

W. H. Squire, the English cellist, plays this work with a broad, warm tone. Obviously, he feels in sympathy with the music, yet one feels his performance would have profited by more incisiveness upon occasion. Sir Hamilton Harty contributes much to the success of the performance, by giving a truly eloquent orchestral background. The recording has been most competently handled.

—P. H. R.

CHAMBER MUSIC

SAMUEL BARBER: *Dover Beach*, performed by Samuel Barber, baritone, and Curtis String Quartet. Victor disc No. 8998, price \$2.00.

THIS piece is an excellent example of Samuel Barber's sensitive talent as a composer, and it affords the listener a double opportunity to judge his work both as composer and soloist. It will be remembered that this twenty-five year old American youth, a nephew of Louise Homer, who created well-deserved comment by winning several prizes for his musical compositions — one of which was played at a Philharmonic concert in New York — was hailed by critics as a musician of substantial promise.

Mr. Barber is indeed a talented composer, one who gives significant assurance of doing good work for the future of American music. His *Dover Beach* is based on a philosophical poem by Matthew Arnold, and this choice is excellent testimony to Mr. Barber's literary imagination, for he has created a piece of music around a poem — of all persons — by Matthew Arnold. One would have suspected that Mr. Barber would have chosen a more lyrical poet, a poet more within the

orbit of his own emotional radiance — such as, for instance, Shelley, Keats or Swinburne, but, perhaps, we are on the verge of witnessing a happier marriage between philosophical verse and poetical music. In any event, it testifies to his courage that not even a philosophical poem by Matthew Arnold has dismayed Samuel Barber from creating a piece of music of singular charm and beauty.

As a singer, Mr. Barber reveals a consistent sonority; he sings admirably, though his diction is, unfortunately, blurred. The Curtis Quartet in an able auxiliary in this rendition. A leaflet is supposed to accompany this record, but we did not receive it with our review copy.

—W. K.

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MENDELSSOHN: *String Quartet No. 1 in E Flat Major, Opus 12*; played by the Budapest String Quartet. Victor set M-307, three discs, price \$6.50.

MENDELSSOHN'S first visit to England in 1829 was indeed a happy one; the beginning of a friendship, which existed through his entire life, between him and the English people. At twenty, he found himself honored and applauded for his creative genius and his interpretive artistry. His *String Quartet in E Flat, Opus 12*, published as his first — although in reality his second in order of composition, was written during his first visit to England — September, 1829. The work bespeaks his elation, the serenity of his spirit, and his naturally cheerful and contented character. As we listen to this music today — over a century old — we are struck by its sincerity, its vivacity and its innate refinement. Although it belongs to another era — an era of romance and sentiment — an era, perhaps, less realistic than our own, still — when we hear it consummately performed, as in the present case, we cannot turn an indifferent ear or assume a patronizing attitude toward its frankly romantic mood. This music may not explore great depths nor rise to supremely eloquent heights, yet its manifold melodic beauties are welcome for their honesty and their warm-heartedness. In an age of restlessness and tension, such music as this can well prove a welcome respite for its serenity and happy charm.

Mendelssohn opens this quartet with a slow introduction to his first *Allegro*, which is said to have been patterned after Beethoven's *Harp Quartet*. The work is divided into four movements, the second of which — marked *Canzonetta* — is well known apart from the

quartet, as it is all too frequently played as an independent composition. It was one of the first chamber music selections of Mendelssohn's to be recorded in its entirety (remember the Flonzaley's acoustic recording of same). This is followed by a charming *Andante*, somewhat hymnal in character, and a vivacious *finale*, in which the composer skillfully reuses thematic material from the first movement.

The recording of this work, like the performance which we have already noted, is excellent.

—P. H. R.

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TURINA: *La oracion del torero*; played by the Gordon String Quartet. Columbia disc, No. 68505-D, price \$1.50.

JOAQUIN TURINA is perhaps Spain's greatest composer of chamber music. His works have not been overdone by recorders, and any new sample is always welcome. *La oracion del torero* has been done before in Spain, but has been available here only as an importation. The Gordon version, therefore, will reach a wider American public, and, let us hope, awaken a desire for more Turina.

The torero's prayer — quaintly translated on the labels as *The narrative of the toreador* — was originally written for a quartet of lutes. It is dismissed by Pedro Morales in Cobbett's *Encyclopedia of Chamber Music* as a minor work. Nevertheless, we must not forget that many of the choicest gems of music are "minor works" simply because of their size, and that, if we were to be honest with ourselves, we should be forced to confess to being bored by many a long-winded "masterpiece." In this case the "minor" music has considerable charm. The program is something like this. Before entering the ring where both glory and danger await him, the *torero* offers up a prayer. While he prays he can hear the music from the ring, and the cries of the excited crowd. As one might expect, there is a strong Spanish flavor to the music, but the composer does not belong to the shallow and brilliant school which one is likely to think of as typical of his country. There is a real seriousness in this work, yet it is in no sense heavy. At once short and melodious, the appeal is not a restricted one.

The Gordon Quartet have learned a lot about recording since their first release some months ago. The balance is now quite satisfactory, and their affection for the music is evident.

—P. M.

COLUMBIA ANNOUNCES

two important vocal sets



An abridged version of
Charpentier's opera

LOUISE

and an album of

ROBERT FRANZ'S LIEDER

(Twenty-four Songs)

sung by the German Lieder Singer

ERNST WOLFF



THE recording of *LOUISE*, personally supervised by the composer, recently was awarded a Grand Prix in Paris. This set, an extremely fine one of paramount recording, is sung by three of France's finest, present-day opera singers — Ninon Vallin, Georges Thill, and André Pernet. This abridged version of *LOUISE* gives all the important, dramatic moments of the opera arranged in a perfect continuity especially for Columbia by the composer — Gustave Charpentier.

THE interpreter of the songs of Robert Franz is a young German baritone who revives the lost art of singing to his own accompaniments in the manner of the late Sir George Henschel. Herr Wolff is a most talented artist — an accomplished singer, pianist and conductor. In the latter role, he was long associated with the Frankfurt Opera.

AND A FIRST RECORDING by Egon Petri

COLUMBIA takes pride in also announcing a recording by Egon Petri—the celebrated Dutch pianist and pedagogue — of Schubert's *Soirée de Vienne*, in the Liszt concert arrangement. When this record was released in England recently, it was hailed for "the beautiful shaping of phrases and tone-gradations" of Mr. Petri, and also as a great advance in the art of piano recording. Don't overlook this outstanding piano record.



COLUMBIA
Phonograph Co., Inc.



NEW YORK CITY

PIANO

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in E flat major* ("Les adieux"), Op. 81a; and BACH: *Prelude and Fugue No. 22, in B flat minor*; played by Wilhelm Bachaus. Two Victor discs, Nos. 8922, 8923, price \$4.00.

VICTOR has been offering considerable consolation of late to those lovers of Beethoven's piano music who cannot afford to keep up with the "Beethoven Sonata Society" albums. The famous *Sonata* was included in Volume 4, and also has been available for several years in a version by Leopold Godowski. Nevertheless, no apologies are needed for the release of the Bachaus performance.

The *Sonata* is in three movements, labeled respectively "Les adieux," "L'absence," and "Le retour." Thus it has the distinction of being the only Beethoven *Sonata* with a definite program. Written during the siege of Vienna in 1809, it bears a dedication to the Archduke Rudolph, and represents the grief of the composer over the flight of His Highness on May 4th of that year, the sorrow in his absence, and the joy on his return, which took place on January 30th, 1810. The motto of the first movement is given out at the very start of the slow introduction and runs through the *Allegro* — three notes over which Beethoven wrote the word "Lebewohl," or "Farewell." The melancholy of the succeeding slow movement is in marked contrast to the gayety of the *Finale*.

Among the nonsensical stories which have sprung up around famous compositions is the one which brings a pair of lovers into the program of this *Sonata*. Of course, the theory has been blasted long ago by the dedication, which is in Beethoven's own hand. Knowing this, however, we are grateful to Mr. Bachaus for avoiding the sentimental in his playing of the work. His grief is healthy and restrained, and his joy at the end is sincere. Godowski, in his Columbia version, may be more poetic, especially in the slow movement, but his happy ending is less exhilarating. Mechanically, I prefer the new set, though it is not the long awaited perfect piano recording.

One of the loveliest of the *Preludes and Fugues* in the *Well tempered clavichord* occupies the fourth side. Bachaus plays Bach as he plays Beethoven which is not, of course in the purest Bach tradition. But he is too clean-cut an artist to sentimentalize, and though he may linger too long over effects and details for the good of the larger design

of the work, he does not fail to make his playing interesting. Here is solace for those who have missed the "Bach Society" sets.
—P. M.

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SCHUBERT - LISZT: *Soirée de Vienne* (piano); played by Egon Petri. Columbia disc No. 68504D, price \$1.50.

PETRI is one of the greatest virtuosos of the keyboard now living. His extraordinary feeling for rhythm and musical line, his absolute mastery of all technical difficulties, place him in the front rank of present-day concert pianists. This is Mr. Petri's debut on records, so far as this country is concerned. Perhaps that debut could have been more auspicious from a purely musical standpoint, but we doubt that it could have been more so from a standpoint of performance.

Petri has a fondness for much of Liszt's arrangements of Schubert's music, and it must be honestly admitted that he plays these more or less over-embellished pieces in the ideal manner. For example, all cadenzas and *fioratura* — with which Liszt has ornamented various Schubert compositions that he has arranged for concert use — are phrased so superbly by Petri that the rhythmic line is never broken. His *rubato* is always under control, and because of this feature of his playing we believe his records merit study from all piano students.

In this arrangement of Schubert's *Soirée de Vienne*, Liszt set about to ornament certain waltzes in order to make them more suitable for concert performances. Petri plays five of the nine waltzes. The recording here is remarkable for its realistic qualities.

—P. G.

ORGAN

HANDEL: *Minuet from Berenice*; and SAM-MARTINI: *Canto Amoroso*; played on the organ by Archer Gibson. 10-inch Victor disc, No. 25312, price 75c.

TWO pleasing transcriptions of early 18th Century classics. The familiar selection from *Berenice* requires no comment. The *Canto Amoroso* is arranged from one of the works of Giuseppe Sammartini, who as St. Martini of London, was renowned as an oboe player at the Opera in London and later as the leader of the chamber concerts given by Frederick, Prince of Wales. The melodious *Canto* was made known to this century as a violin transcription by Mischa Elman. The *strings* of Mr. Gibson's organ at times

suggest a harpsichord in the accompaniment, and at times over-record against the light tremulant flute and vox humana (not in perfect tune) that carry the air.

—A. P. D.

VIOLIN

HARRIS: *Poem*; played by Albert Spalding, with piano accompaniment by André Benoist. Victor disc, No. 8997, price \$2.00.

IF recording activities are any criterion, then Albert Spalding may be considered America's favorite violinist and Roy Harris our most popular composer. The two are now brought together by Victor, in a recent composition of Mr. Harris, written, we understand, for Mr. Spalding.

Whatever may be the actual comparative value of Harris against other contemporary Americans, he is certainly one of the saner and more understandable of them. We do not, however, claim to know what prompted him to call the present work a *Poem*, though the title seems in a certain formal sense to be particularly appropriate. The melody is a consistent development of an idea, and, while scarcely as metrical as a Longfellow verse, it can, without too great a strain on the imagination, be divided into lines and stanzas. It is almost as though it were a setting of words now illuminated. It is distinctly a lyric verse, descriptive rather than passionate. Though the composition works up logically to a very definite climax, there is no impression of tremendous import in the music. The story runs its course simply and directly, without wasting words.

Mr. Spalding, as is his wont, plays this gentlemanly music in the manner of a true gentleman. The piano accompaniment is well supplied by André Benoist, though the Victor engineers (whose work is otherwise so admirable) seem to cling to the old *prima donna* notion of the importance of soloists.

—P. M.

VOCAL

FRANZ: *Lieder (Twenty-four Songs)*; sung by Ernst Wolff, accompanying himself at the piano. Columbia Masterworks Album, No. 253, with two 10-inch and three 12-inch discs, price \$6.50.

THE *American Music Lover* takes pride in recalling to your attention the article on Robert Franz and the German Lied, by Mr. Philip Miller, which appeared in our issue of June, 1935. Mr. Miller stated the importance of Franz in the development of the Ger-

man art song, the characteristics of his contribution to this genre, and the deplorable neglect of these little masterpieces by concert singers and recording companies. Columbia has taken this neglect to heart and has made ample amends in releasing this album of twenty-four songs. Mr. Miller lamented that we had only two, and these unsatisfactory, Franz songs on domestically available records, and now, at one coup, we are blessed with two dozen! We feel justly proud that we were instrumental in having this album made.

Our first impression of these records is that they manifest a labor of love on the part of the performer. This young German, Ernst Wolff, was a conductor of the opera orchestra at Frankfurt-am-Main, who had to leave his post under the present German political regime. He possesses a sympathetic baritone voice that reflects its Teutonic and Italian training — a voice singularly adapted to the refinements of these cameo-like songs, and yet capable of the ringing sonorities necessary for the Italian operatic repertoire. Herr Wolff is also an excellent piano accompanist and it is not surprising that he prefers to sing to his own accompaniments. He is so completely at ease within the limitations imposed by Franz, and has so thoroughly submerged himself in the composer's style that for the time we accept it as his own. He is constantly aware of the simple musical means by which Franz intends that the texts of his songs shall be revealed, and he sings them directly to our hearts. Always in his singing we are aware of a rhythmic flexibility and the feeling of the exact nuance suited to the phrase of the moment.

Of the twenty-four songs selected from Franz's output of nearly three hundred not more than six or eight will be familiar to the average good musician. On the first record we welcome three novelties — arrangements of old fifteenth and sixteenth century German folk songs, with two of the three stanzas given in each case. *Dich meiden* brings to mind the churchly plainsong by its flowing, modal melody. *Umsonst* has a melody such as Schubert might have written; *Auf dem Meere* the impact of his declamatory style, and *Gute Nacht* a chordal accompaniment reminiscent of his *Tod und das Maedchen*. *Die helle Sonne leuchtet* has Schumann's harmonic richness; *Wie des Mondes Abbild* the ethereal enchantment of his *Mondnacht*; and *Marie* just as much of his naivete as his *Du bist wie eine Blume*. In *Abschied* we see Franz's frequent predilection for Chopinesque broken chords sustained by pedal.

The opening phrase of *Du liebes Auge* shows a striking parallel to the beginning of the *Tristan Liebestod*. *Wand' ich in dem Wald* is an eloquent example of Franz's mastery in contrapuntal accompaniments, where every note is right; just to perfection. *Gleich und Gleich* catches the spirit of its lyric without the elaborate atmospheric accompaniment and strained vocal line that make Hugo Wolf's setting of the words seem a trifle sophisticated and perhaps condescending. It is easy to pick out similarities in detail that relate these songs to those of the other great masters of the *Lied*, but we can never forget that Franz always retains his own individual manner.

Ernst Wolff, because he is both the singer and the accompanist, maintains a rare homogeneity. If at times he appears a bit reserved and slights an occasional syllable, these are but motes in the bright sunlight of his usual renditions. Columbia is to be congratulated for enlisting the services of so profound an artist, a man ideally endowed to communicate the intimacy of these songs.

As an aid to musicianly study and complete enjoyment, Mr. Miller has prepared a booklet giving for each song its opus number, the name of the poet, the German text, a good English prose paraphrase, and at times an explanatory or descriptive note.

The recording is clear, with a satisfactory balance between the voice and the piano.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

CHARPENTIER: *Louise* (Abridged version) with Ninon Vallin as *Louise*, Georges Thill as *Julien*, André Pernet as *The Father*, and Mme. A. Lecouvreur as *The Mother*. Orchestra and chorus under direction of Eugene Bigot. Columbia Operatic Set No. 12, eight discs, price \$12.00.

CHARPENTIER wrote his popular opera *Louise* at the turn of the century. The story, considered daring and somewhat revolutionary, was founded on a socialistic philosophy and on a similar naturalistic method employed by Zola. Charpentier's art is directed to the working classes, and *Louise* is a story of the people. The opera quickly established itself in the French repertoire after its premiere on February 2nd, 1900. Its success was undoubtedly due in part to the fact that it provided the singer in the title part with a particularly effective role — gratifying both musically and dramatically. In line with this is the story of how Mary Garden first appeared in the characterization on April 12th, substituting for Mlle. Riotan (the original *Louise*), who was taken ill in the middle

of the opera. Miss Garden was called upon to go on for the third act, with only a day's preparation; but aided by her extraordinary dramatic abilities she achieved immediate success. Thereafter the opera was closely associated with her name, although others — including Geraldine Farrar, Genevieve Vix, Beatrice La Palme, and Marie Louise Edvina in their day, and more recently Lucrezia Bori, Ninon Vallin and Yvonne Brothier — have had considerable success in the part.

An abridged version of *Louise* on records was a splendid idea and it was appropriate that it should have been arranged by the composer now in his 76th year. The important dramatic sequences are all given, and the continuity of the whole has been fully retained.

Charpentier achieved his one signal success with this opera, which is undeniably a masterpiece in its way. Into its mold, it may be said, he poured the fullest measure of his creative genius, and it alone has succeeded in establishing his name in the musical world. *Julien*, its successor, produced in 1915 — proves this point, for the latter was only a hodge-podge of music, drawn from a previous score, lacking the essential sparkle and verve of *Louise*. The story of *Louise* for its time, was undeniably a daring one, and the manner in which the composer handled it showed that he possessed unusual imaginative and innovative faculties. The music he conceived is frankly romantic, ardent and colorful, honest and unaffected. The orchestral writing and the treatment of the voices is effectively handled, and most suitable to the dramatic action. There are tawdry spots in the score, but they are in accord with the action, and help provide contrast. Today — both the story and the music seem dated, but the emotional element involved is so sincerely felt and expressed that there is good reason for the opera's endurance.

The present arrangement of *Louise* is very cleverly handled, and very little of any significance has been eliminated. Perhaps more of the Montmartre scene could have been advantageously included, particularly the Rag Pickers solo. Too — the curtailment of Irma's solo and the shortening of the love-duet might have been avoided, but these are not serious omissions. Charpentier has rearranged Julien's Serenade and given it a special ending, and also the Crowning of the Muse. Particularly gratifying in the recording is his arrangement of the last act.

The soloists are all well chosen. Ninon Vallin and Georges Thill sing the music of the lovers with conviction and effect, and

André Pernet, as the father, is excellent. Eugene Bigot directing an unnamed orchestra, obviously a good sized one, gives a fervent and telling performance; and the recording is brilliant and lifelike. So, all in all, we have a truly representative version of the opera on records.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

MOZART: *Die Zauberfloete*, *Der hoelle Rache*; and OFFENBACH: *Tales of Hoffman*, *Olympia's Aria*; sung by Miliza Korjus with orchestra. Victor disc, No. 11921, price \$1.50.

THIS disc affords an interesting comparison in coloratura styles. *The Magic Flute* air is dramatically conceived, and its very difficulties dazzle us and build up the characterization of supernatural awe and terror that the "Queen of the Night" represents. The Queen begins in fury and every succeeding phrase intensifies her burning hatred. A singer must make us feel that she is possessed by powerful magic forces. Miliza Korjus is inspired to accept the magnificent challenge of the music. Her fresh, sweet voice gives weight, and therefore conviction, to the florid passages, and a frenzied and ebullient delivery produce the wanted effect. Seldom have we heard the many high F's sung as effortlessly and with such exactitude of pitch. Every note of the difficult passage in triplets comes off cleanly. The voice and the Berlin Broadcasting Orchestra under Johannes Mueller are sonorously recorded.

The Doll Song from the first act of Hoffman is music of an utterly different stamp, and might have been written by any number of competent composers — Offenbach, Adam, Arditi, etc. It requires brilliance in execution and a grace in style, but remains nothing more than a first-rate display piece for the singer's pyrotechnical talents. Korjus sings it with mechanical precision, but with more animation than the doll need display. She does not emphasize the passages depicting the running down of the doll's spring apparatus. The accompanying chorus of the onlookers is omitted. The recording both of the voice and Franz Schoenbaumsfeld's unnamed orchestra is below the high standard on the other side of the disc.

From a collector's standpoint it is regrettable that for domestic release the original coupling of selections has been changed. H. M. V. gave the *Martern aller Arten* (*Seraglio*) with the *Zauberfloete* aria. The result was two examples of Mozart's dramatic

coloratura unequalled by any other electrically recorded disc. For such style we have to go back to the early Lilli Lehmann and Frieda Hempel interpretations which, as records, definitely belong to a closed era.

—A. P. D.

(Continued on Page 60)

EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 33)

or again the fact that it is a first edition. These essentially exterior points which have nothing whatsoever to do with the *raison-d'être* of the book — which is its content — nevertheless undeniably enhance its value to some people. The fact that others are mainly interested in the book's content is, however, the reason for reprints. And this latter fact is a most important one, for no cultural element should be created or maintained for those in the minority.

It is also an argument for the re-issue of all record society sets, and one that we cannot dismiss and should not be dismissed as non-parallel or irrelevant. For — as one of our correspondents recently wrote — "limiting the sales of good music to the few who have the price is an insidious system, which has no relation to the present nationwide one of providing good music via radio, etc., for the greater majority of American music lovers."

Since THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER is interested in the promotion of music in the home — of which recorded music is admittedly a prominent feature — we would like to make some practical suggestions to those who sponsor society sets. By all means continue to issue them. They do much to create wider interest and respect for recorded music. And, after all, the collector who is interested in rare editions is entitled to consideration and respect, but — and this is a most important "but" — so too is the other fellow — he who buys reprints, second editions, etc., because he cannot afford to buy subscription sets or lay out money ahead when and as often as he might like to. Too, there are those who are primarily interested in a set for its music, and feel that — even though they can afford it — they do not care to be taxed extra just to acquire it in a special or exclusive edition.

By all means bring out a special edition — a so-called society set — of an important musical work, which deserves or needs especial emendation — but do it in the manner of a similar book issue: limit it to so many

sets — each one numbered — with autographs of the artists performing, when and if possible, either on the records themselves or in the front of the album designed to include them, or again in the booklet accompanying the set. Let the sale of this special edition — if it is deemed advisable — precede or take preference over a more general one. In other words, wait six months or more before re-issuing the set in the regular commercial way. But — and here is the crux of the situation — do not reserve the issue *just for those who subscribe to it*, for this procedure is not only unfair but a pernicious system of distributing an art-product, and — in the case of music — one that should not be honored.

As this magazine is concerned primarily with the American phonophiles' interests and problems — we urge the record manufacturers to re-issue all society sets in a cheaper edition. And we urge our readers to write us about this and other problems, so that we can present a cross-current of public opinion to the record companies from time to time.

The recent death of the Fuller-Maitland distinguished English critic and author, in his eightieth year, removes another important writer from the rank of eminent musical authorities. He has long been identified with musical scholarship and research, his activities covered editing, translation and newspaper criticism. He edited *Grove's Dictionary of Music*, 2nd Edition, and contributed to its subsequent issues; wrote the volume, *The Age of Bach and Handel*, for the *Oxford History of Music*; and with Clara Bell translated Spitta's *Life of Bach*; contributed to the important *Musical Pilgrim Series*; and is the author of biographies on Schumann and Brahms, the latter considered to be one of the most comprehensive books dealing with this master. We lament the death of this significant critic, for his demise is an immeasurable loss to musical criticism. Fuller-Maitland belonged to an age when scholarship in music was considered to be an essential part of the equipment of a writer, and the fact that his knowledge was of such high quality will make his name long remembered as one of the most outstanding musicologists of our time.

The death of Claudia Muzio, Italian operatic soprano, in her forty-fourth year on May 24th, was a shock to the musical world. Mme. Muzio was one of the greatest sopranos of our times, and an operatic artist of splendid attainments. Her voice was extraordinarily

flexible and of an unusually expressive quality. She sang lyrical and dramatic roles equally well and effectively. Her portrayal of *Aida* has been appraised as one of the greatest of all times, and likewise her portrayal of *Violetta* in *La Traviata*. Mme. Muzio will be remembered for many outstanding operatic performances both in Europe and in South and North America, where she has sung with signal success in the foremost opera houses. Our readers — we feel certain — will be gratified to know that Columbia will shortly issue two albums — an *Operatic Recital* and a *Song Recital* — made by this great diva during this past year.

THE PERMANENT CHOPIN

(Continued from Page 38)

So the Mazurkas are still safe, and the fact that their safeness, their freshness is not due to neglect is proved by those few that we hear played very often and yet have never grown tired of. Others, too, will stand repeated hearings — and that is where the phonograph comes in, especially as most of us can never hope to play these elusive pieces ourselves in anything like a satisfactory manner. With the thirty recorded examples — and doubtless there will soon be more — we can familiarize ourselves with this fascinating department of Chopin's music, and it is my belief that it can stand the test and that we shall daily find in it more and more to admire.

(Continued from Page 59)

Curly Hair ("Tchoobtchick") and *Farewell, My Camp* ("Proshchai moi tabor"); sung by Peter Lescenco, with Frank Fox's Orchestra. Columbia 4123-M, price \$1.00.

THIS record deserves only praise. Neither song makes any pretense to be anything except a popular song — a song of and for the people, and as such Peter Lescenco presents them, in his own arrangements. The singer is a showman with an easy manner; his easily produced light high baritone encounters no difficulties, and his facile expression shows aptitude and experience for making every little point along the way. The falsetto "whoops" in *Curly Hair* are a tried and true trick for getting a laugh. The gypsy rhythms of *Farewell, My Camp* alternate neatly. Frank Fox's orchestra of violins, accordions, and plucked strings, furnish as fine a set of accompaniments as any singer could hope for. The recording is as smooth as the music.

—A. P. D.

In the Popular Vein

By VAN

BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*On the Air*, and *Sunshine at Midnight*. Lud Gluskin and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7664.

On the Air has a rather unusual history. Written by Carroll Gibbons, American pianist, bandsman and songwriter who found London more congenial than New York, it has been quite persistently played both here and abroad for the past five or six years, but not until now has it been recorded in America and by the leader who is currently using it as his air signature, Lud Gluskin. Naturally enough, he presents it with all his customary suavity and it makes an exceptionally attractive recording, even though one deplores the necessity for including a vocal chorus, since the lyrics in this case are wholly bad, as well as superfluous.

* * * *

AAAA—*Would You?* and *I've Got a Heavy Date*. Richard Himber and his Orchestra. Victor 25298.

Good waltzes are considerably scarcer than hens' teeth these days (and by that we mean *good* waltzes) but the estimable Nacio Herb Brown can practically be counted upon to furnish us with at least one a year and *Would You?* is a creditable addition to his long list of past successes. It's true that nearly everything he writes sounds more or less alike, being variants of just one good tune, but the public doesn't seem to care, so why should Nacio Herb? Himber is at his best when handling a number of this sort and really makes a delight of it, although his efforts to swing in three-four time on the last chorus are in questionable taste.

* * * *

AAA—*Small Town Girl*, and *You Can't Judge a Book By Its Cover*. Orville Knapp and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7654.

This West Coast aggregation recently opened at the Waldorf-Astoria and is rapidly making a reputation for pleasing work. Almost too restrained rhythmically to be highly danceable, the band employs a good many rather novel and effective devices, all of which are in good taste, and may well develop into a metropolitan favorite. The latter is the better side, being a quite attractive number from the recent *Mask and Wig* show.

* * * *

AAA—*We'll Rest at the End of the Trail*, and *A Rendezvous With a Dream*. Johnny Green and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7662.

Green's recording appearances have been none too frequent of late, which is a pity, since he invariably does conscientious and craftsmanlike work. The former is another *Boots and Saddles, Wagon Wheels* thing written by a couple of apparent newcomers to songwriting, Messrs. Poulton and Rose, but it is a particularly good song of its type and Green gives

it a smooth, songful performance, although a wee bit less of Green's own highly publicized but none too distinguished piano work would be welcomed by one of his most consistent admirers.

* * * *

AAA—*I'll Stand By*, and *Love Came Out of the Night*. Eddy Duchin and his Orchestra. Victor 25318.

Mercifully absent from recent Duchin recordings have been the vocal choruses of Mr. Lew Sherwood, who plays trumpet much, much better than he sings. In his place, on this and other discs, is Jerry Cooper, able vocalist, who strives to sound like Bing Crosby and is fairly successful in doing so. Otherwise, these are identical to several hundred other recordings which Duchin has made in the past few years.

HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*Rhythm Saved the World*, and *At the Codfish Ball*. Tommy Dorsey and his Clambake Seven. Victor 25314.

These are two high-geared "swingies" done by a band which is now functioning quite perfectly, like a well-oiled mechanism should. *Rhythm Saved the World* is one of the multitudinous pseudo-historical novelties which followed in the wake of *Here Come the British*, and the band, aided and abetted by Edythe Wright and her lusty vocalizing, do a bang-up job on it. We could, however, dispense with the awesome "My! My!" which La Wright contributes to the conclusion of nearly every disc in which she appears. It was sort of cute the first couple of times, but most emphatically does not bear endless repetition.

* * * *

AAAA—*Jangled Nerves*, and *I'll Always Be in Love With You*. Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra. Victor 25317.

If *Jangled Nerves* isn't a perfect summation of the hot jazz movement (as well as a singularly apt description of this particular number) then I don't know what would be. Sober, reflective musician that he is, Henderson lets the boys run things pretty much to suit themselves here and the result is a perfectly harum-scarum disc, with frenetic *solis* by trumpet, trombone and tenor, a generally mad scramble, indeed, from start to finish. It's loads of fun, though, and swings terrifically.

* * * *

AAAA—*The Mayor of Alabam'*, and *'S Wonderful*. Frankie Trumbauer and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7663.

Trumbauer and the boys dust off one of the better Gershwin tunes, *'S Wonderful*, and do a lively and amusing job on it. With a few intentionally corny phrases naughtily tucked in here and there, it features Master Teagarden and his shiny trombone, while the reverse is another one Trum-

bauer's own rather fantastic concoctions, with an unidentified guitarist taking top honors. All is done in a spirit of great good humor and a thoroughly likable disc is the result.

AAA—*Star Dust*. Benny Goodman's and Tommy Dorsey's Orchestras. Victor 25320.

Here is a novelty. With two different recordings of *Star Dust* on the same record, we have an ideal chance to study the methods of two great bands in handling the same number. Although both versions are excellent, it seems to me that Dorsey's is very slightly the better of the two, being more in keeping with the character of the tune itself. Goodman's, however, is more incisive rhythmically, so it's about fifty-fifty.

AAA—*The Glory of Love*, and *You Can't Pull the Wool Over My Eyes*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25316.

It seems a physical impossibility for Goodman to put out a bad record — or one that is only moderately good, for that matter. *The Glory of Love*, which is a tune that reminds you in general of every old-time musical comedy number you ever heard and in particular of *Makin' Whoopee*, is certainly far from promising material for Goodman or anyone else, but by the time he vitalizes it

with one of his typical performances, you're willing to proclaim it the very pinnacle of songwriting. But Goodman has a way of being able to do that with most any number, so don't be misled.

AA—*All My Life*, and *It's No Fun*. "Fats" Waller and his Rhythm. Victor 25296.

As pointed out to the parishioners in last month's letter, *All My Life*, although first introduced in the film, *Laughing Irish Eyes*, is a tune that all people just love to play with, and "Fats" transforms it from a sentimental slop ballad into as rollicking a bit of swinging as you'll want to hear, backed up by another number which is hand tailored for "Fats" and his obstreperous genius.

AA—*Junk Man*, Jack Teagarden and his Orchestra, and *Casa Loma Stomp*, Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra. Brunswick 7652.

The label on *Junk Man* is something of a misnomer, since the disc is virtually a harp solo by Casper Reardon with orchestral accompaniment. As such, however, it is a quite charming example of this talented chap's work and serves as proof that any instrument in the orchestra may be effectively "swung" when in the proper hands. The reverse is, of course, the 'steenth re-issue of the old pre-Camel Hour recording of *Casa Loma Stomp*.

Swing Music Notes

By ENZO ARCHETTI

In the May issue of *Metronome* the final results of its Dance Band Contest were published. In this contest, covering a period of several months and the entire country, only band leaders and musicians were permitted to vote for what they considered to be the best swing band, the best sweet band, and the favorite band of all. Every effort was made to limit the voting to musicians in order to get a fair consensus of opinion from those who should know what is best and in order to avoid piling up an exaggerated number of votes from rabid fans of this or that orchestra. The results, I feel, are just and well deserved. It is hard to imagine how any fan could dispute them but, of course, at this point I could be very thoroughly squelched by that time worn phrase: *De gustibus non est disputandum*.

Space limitations prohibit the publication of the complete results of the contest here but for those who wish to make comparisons, these are the first five in each group:

(Best Swing Band): Benny Goodman, Casa Loma, Jim Dorsey, Jimmie Lunceford, Duke Ellington; (Best Sweet Band): Ray Noble, Guy Lombardo, Hal Kemp, Wayne King, Isham Jones; (Favorite Band of All): Benny Goodman, Casa Loma, Ray Noble, Paul Whiteman, Hal Kemp.

Metronome draws these conclusions from the contest: "The most significant aspect of the entire contest is that hep American musicians . . . have definitely swung to swing. Numbers . . . speak louder than words. There are 57 bands listed in the final standing of *Favorite Bands of All*. Take just one-third of those 57 bands, in other words 19. Add the total (number of votes) of the 57 bands: you'll get 58,240. Add the total points garnered by the 19 swing bands; you'll get 4,556. What does that show? Just this: Modern, hep musicians throughout the country have voted 55 per cent of their points for

the nineteen swing bands, and only forty-five per cent of their points for the thirty-eight sweet bands. Or, looking at it this way, more than half the points went to only one-third of the bands, and all of those bands were swing bands! . . . Statistics prove that American musicians are definitely swing minded and swing preferring."

Congratulations to Benny Goodman, Casa Loma, and Ray Noble for the high honors they won. The *American Music Lover* heartily endorses them.

And speaking of Benny Goodman: it is rumored that late in April he recorded the Mozart Clarinet Quintet with the Pro-Arte Quartet, in Chicago. Benny Goodman is known to be a lover of classic music and it is a fact that he has played with musician friends, in the privacy of his home, some of the great chamber music in which the clarinet is featured, but this is surely the first time he has recorded anything besides jazz . . . if the rumor is true. Among jazz musicians of our day, and the past, men of Goodman's calibre are indeed rare. They can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The *Famous Door* on West 52nd Street, New York, the scene of many jam sessions and the stopping off place of many fine swing bands, has closed . . . bankrupt. It is said that it will reorganize and reopen. Red McKenzie's Famous Door Orchestra, in the meantime, is at the 18 *Club* but from all indications it will soon break up. Bunny Berigan, the first to make the break, is forming his own band. The line-up will be: Nonnie Bernardi, Artie Drilinger, Carl Swift, and Pete Mondello, saxes; Ricci Tartini, Irving Goodman, and Bunny Berigan, trumpets; George Mazza and Bud Smith, trombones; Joe Lipman, piano; Tom Morgan, guitar; Martin Stuhlmaker, bass; and Bill Flanagan, drums. Most of the men are young and new. The band is in rehearsal now.

A new book on jazz has appeared. Hilton Schleman has written *Rhythm On Records*. It consists of 400 odd pages in which are listed complete details of every record made since 1905, commercial or hot, including the personnels and the names of the leader. It is reported to be an invaluable book to all who are interested in the details of the records made in England and America between the years 1905 and 1935. At present, the book is available only from Melody Maker, Ltd., 21 Tudor Street, London, E. C. 4, at 7s, 6d, plus 6d postage. This book will be commented on in detail next month.

The attempts to define swing continue. The latest appeared in an article in *Metronome* by Ralph Yaw under the title of *What Is Swing?* In part, he says: "As far as an analysis can be carried, *swing* is the audible effect produced by a musician or musicians playing their instruments in such a manner that the sound comes forth with accents which are so spaced as to cause a rhythmic exhilaration in the mind of the listener."

On Sunday night, May 24th, one of the most important events in the history of swing music took place at the Imperial Theatre, New York: New York's first Swing Music Concert. It was sponsored by the Onyx Club and planned and directed by Joe Helbock of that Club.

Never before had such an array of swing bands and artists been presented at one place at the same time. This concert was a grand success and that success is a promise in itself of more in the future.

The program read like a Blue Book of the Swing World: Joe Venuti, Wingy Mannone, Arthur Shaw, Bob Crosby, Red Norvo, Stuff Smith, Bunny Berigan, Tommy Dorsey, Paul Whiteman, Adrian Rollini, Frank Chase, Louis Armstrong, Red Nichols — all with their orchestras. These and the Casa Loma and the Original Memphis Five were the promised features of the night. To the swing fans these names mean more than names of orchestra leaders for even greater stars are in the personnels of these bands: Bud Freeman, Jack and Charles Teagarden, Frank Trumbauer, Pee Wee Hunt, Luis Russell, Pop Foster, Maurice Purtill, Eddie Condon and Ray Bauduc.

It was too much to expect that all these artists would show up. Some didn't — like Joe Venuti, Red Nichols, and the Original Memphis Five, but they were more than compensated for, because in their place there came Teddy Wilson, Chick Webb, Willie "The Lion" Smith, Mildred Bailey, and Meade Lux Lewis.

To review each number of the three hour concert would be impossible in the limited space of these pages. It is enough to say that each orchestra did its part excellently. Every important soloist had a chance to show what he could do. Unquestionably the highlights of the evening were the Stuff Smith's three numbers, Mildred Bailey's singing with Teddy's excellent piano work to back her up, Chick Webb's drumming with Bunny's bunch, and Louis Armstrong who capped the evening with furiously paced "Tiger Rag."

Every item of the concert was not on the same high level. Frank Chase and his Saxophone Sextette definitely did not click. Meade Lux Lewis, who was specially flown in from Chicago by John Hammond, pounded out three pieces too much alike to please the audience. It grew restless. But the good things were so good that the lesser fare was quickly forgotten. In fact after leaving the Imperial it was like leaving a banquet table where one had eaten not wisely but too well. There was just that suggestion of a feeling that we had had just a little bit more than was good for us.

RADIO HIGHLIGHTS and NEWS

The recent tour of the Philadelphia Orchestra represents the fulfillment of a long existent ambition of Stokowski to bring his music to people all over the country. The coast to coast tour, which started April 13th in Hartford, Conn., and ended in New York City on May 17th, took in 27 cities throughout the United States and Canada. 11,113 miles was covered in six weeks time by the 103 members of the orchestra's ensemble, who carried with them a quarter of a million dollars worth of instruments. This tour represents the largest enterprise of its kind, ever made by a leading symphony orchestra.

One feature of the tour, demonstrating Mr. Stokowski's flare for showmanship, was inaugurated on the approach of the orchestra to Denver. While the special train carrying them was roaring over the rails, the orchestra, with Mr. Stokowski directing, went on the air from the train's baggage car. Thus Stokowski once again demonstrated his complete sympathy with the scientific potentialities of his time.

The music of Claude Debussy is neither vague nor carelessly written as has been charged by some critics, but is a marvel of technical perfection and packed with subtle meaning, according to E. Robert Schmitz, internationally-known pianist heard on WABC-Columbia network Wednesdays — 4:00 to 4:30 p. m., EDST.

"Debussy was really more precise than any other musician I have ever known," said Schmitz, who was a close friend and a pupil of the French composer. "His attention to detail amounted almost to a mania, in fact. I remember an occasion in Paris when he stopped a rehearsal of his opera, *Pelleas and Melisande* until he could step down from the podium, pick up a pin which he had noticed on the carpet and deposit it in a waste basket. On another occasion I was rehearsing his *Rhapsody* for clarinet and orchestra when an oboe player struck a wrong note. The composer, who had been listening from the rear of the auditorium, ran forward, climbed upon the stage and, without taking his eyes off the squirming oboist, turned the score back three pages and, still without looking at the music, placed his finger on the blue note.

"Debussy's music is so subtle that most people don't trouble to search for its inner meaning. Time is proving that his detractors were wrong and that he is one of the greatest of the moderns, and, as a satirist, is second to none."

Lionel Barrymore, noted character actor of screen and stage, added two roles to his lifetime repertoire when he recently came to the microphone as a regular star of Sigmund Romberg's Swift programs, which are broadcast over the NBC-Red network every Monday at 9:30 p. m., EDST. First he made his bow as a music commentator, styling himself a "catalyst" who was trying to make the path of understanding easier between the listener and the music played by Romberg's orchestra.

Now, too, he is heard each week in readings of great classics from literature, particularly those by American authors. Barrymore is peculiarly suited to both these roles by reason of his hobby, which is music, and his own wide reading.

In Hollywood he often entertains his friends as a pianist and has written several concertos for piano and orchestra. Etching is another of his hobbies and several of his works are now in New York galleries.

NBC MUSIC GUILD PROGRAMS

June 4—Franck: *Quartet in D major* — Perole Quartet.

June 5—Tibor Serly: *Sonata in B minor*, violin and piano.

June 9—Sowerby: *Quartet No. 2*, Gordon String Quartet; Haydn: *Quartet in F major*, Gordon String Quartet.

June 15—Kreiser: *Quartet in A minor*, Kreiner Quartet.

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL SYMPHONY

June 7—All Debussy Program.

June 14—Three Stravinsky Works.

June 21—All Ravel Program.

June 6—Boston "Pops" Concert — Silbelius: *Finlandia*; Dukas: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*; Wagner, *Tannhauser*, Overture.

Leonard Smith, 19-year-old cornet soloist, is the newest discovery of Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman and will be featured this summer during the NBC broadcasts of the Goldman Band concerts. Young Smith will perform many of his own compositions and will alternate with Frank Elsass who has been soloist for the past two years.

Although Dr. Goldman is always the sponsor of young musicians, he has particular interest in cornetists since that was his own background in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra for ten years. As a result of this interest and the intensive personal coaching which Dr. Goldman gives his proteges his band has produced several world-famous cornetists, among them Del Staigers, Waino Kauppi and Ernest Williams, teacher of Leonard Smith. The new soloist was born in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and has already had considerable experience as an orchestra and band member.

Dr. Frank Black, General Music Director of the National Broadcasting Company, has been engaged as guest conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra for a series of six concerts to be presented during the Great Lakes Exposition in Cleveland this summer. The first of them will be on Tuesday evening, July 28, and the series will continue on consecutive nights, except Friday, with matinee and evening concerts on Saturday, August 2nd.

This will be Dr. Black's second guest appearance with one of America's major symphony orchestras. He was invited to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra in two concerts last summer.

Dr. Black, whose extensive activities in radio have won him high prestige with the connoisseurs of both art music and light music, is a native of Philadelphia. He started his music career as a choir boy in that city and then took up the piano, studying under the late Rafael Joseffy for six years. For a while he was a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and then opportunities opened for him to conduct theatre orchestras in that city. After concertizing as a young pianist he became arranger and accompanist for the famous Revelers Male Quartet. The experience which he gained as General Music Director of the Brunswick Phonograph Company equipped Dr. Black for the technicalities of radio and eventually for the post of General Music Director of NBC.

His conducting of the NBC String Symphony and of the NBC Symphony Orchestra has won the praise of music authorities, just as his work as arranger and conductor of lighter musical programs has made him a popular favorite with all classes of radio listeners from coast to coast and in Europe where certain of his broadcast programs have been heard on regular schedule.

A festival of modern music will be presented by the Radio City Music Hall Symphony during broadcasts over National Broadcasting Company networks on three consecutive Sundays in the month of June.

To encourage young American composers, and also to familiarize radio listeners with the master modernists, representative works of four great composers, Stravinsky, Debussy, Da Falla and Ravel, will be performed by the Symphony Orchestra during the festival weeks.

The modern cycle will begin on Sunday, June 7, with a program devoted to the works of Debussy. Sunday, June 14, the program will include the compositions of Stravinsky and De Falla; and Sunday, June 21, the cycle will conclude with an all-Ravel broadcast. Each program will be heard over the NBC-Blue network from 12:30 to 1:30 p. m., EDST.

In addition to the seventy-five piece symphony, several soloists will contribute to the programs, among them Viola Philo, dramatic soprano; and Edwina Eustis, contralto.

An innovation in NBC Music Guild programs began last month, on Monday, May 18th, with the presentation of two young "artists of tomorrow" in a performance of Brahms' *Sonata for Piano and Violin in G major*. Frederick Buldrini, this year's winner of the Walter Naumburg Foundation award for violin, and Jacques Abram, both students at the Juilliard Graduate School of Music, were the artists heard.

Heretofore only famous chamber music ensembles and noted chamber music artists have been presented by the NBC Music Guild, but to encourage the outstanding talent at the country's leading music conservatories, several NBC Music Guild programs will feature graduate artist students during coming weeks.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from Page 47)

Rondo Capriccioso and De Falla's *Spanish Dance*.

Having had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Heifetz play these numbers twice during the season just ended, I feel that many collectors and devotees of the violin would be very anxious to acquire these gems done in the Heifetz manner.

Sincerely yours,

H. ROSENBLUM.

Chicago, Ill. May 18, 1936

* * * *

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STEPHEN B. FASSETT.

Woodmere, L. I. May 21, 1936.

Our Radio Dial

Time Indicated is Eastern Daylight Saving Time

SUNDAY—

- 8:00 AM—Melody Hour (NBC-WEAF)
- 11:30 AM—Major Bowes' Capitol Family
(NBC-WEAF)
- 11:30 AM—Samovar Serenade; Balalaika Orch.
(NBC-WJZ)
- 12:00 AM—Salt Lake City Choir and Organ
(CBS-WABC)
- 12:30 PM—Radio City Music Hall (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—The French Trio (CBS-WABC)
- 3:00 PM—Everybody's Music — Howard Bar-
low (CBS-WABC)
- 3:45 PM—Henri Deering, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:30 PM—Heifetz Russian Singers
(CBS-WABC)
- 4:30 PM—Temple of Song; Chicago A Capella
Choir (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:00 PM—Jack Benny — Green's Orchestra
(NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Phil Baker & Co. (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Fireside Recitals (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—Bowe's Amateur Hour (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—The Art of Song (BBS-WOR)
- 9:00 PM—Manhattan Merry-Go-Round
(NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Detroit Symphony with Soloists
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—General Motors Concert
(NBC-WEAF)
- 10:30 PM—Barclay's Community Singing
(CBS-WABC)

MONDAY—

- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—Waltz Favorites (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:00 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
- 4:15 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
- 6:05 PM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—Nelson Eddy, Margaret Speaks
(NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Sinclair Minstrels (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Lux Radio Theatre (CBS-WABC)
- 9:30 PM—Eddy Brown — Alfred Wallenstein
(BBS-WOR)

TUESDAY—

- 1:45 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Camel Caravan — Walter O'Keefe
(CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Ben Bernie (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:30 PM—NBC String Symphony — Frank
Black (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:30 PM—Ed Wynn & Co. (NBC-WEAF)
- 10:00 PM—Parties at Pickfair (CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—Wallenstein's String Orchestra
(BBS-WOR)
- 10:45 PM—Williard Robinson — Deep River
Orchestra (CBS-WABC)

WEDNESDAY—

- 2:00 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:00 PM—E. Robert Schmitz, pianist
(CBS-WABC)
- 8:00 PM—Cavalcade of America (CBS-WABC)
- 8:30 PM—Burns and Allen (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Kostelanetz Orchestra with Soloists
(CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Fred Allen (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—NBC Concert Hour — Cesare Sodero
(NBC-WJZ)
- 9:30 PM—Alfred Wallenstein's Sinfonietta
(BBS-WOR)

THURSDAY—

- 10:05 AM—Alden Edkins, bass (NBC-WEAF)
- 11:30 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:15 PM—Wright and Howells, piano duo
(CBS-WABC)
- 6:05 PM—James Wilkinson, baritone
(NBC-WJZ)
- 7:45 PM—Music Is My Hobby (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:00 PM—Columbia Concert Hour
(CBS-WABC)
- 8:00 PM—Rudy Vallee and Guest Artists
(NBC-WEAF)
- 8:30 PM—Little Symphony Orchestra with
Philip James (BBS-WOR)
- 9:00 PM—Camel Caravan (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Maxwell House Show Boat
(NBC-WEAF)
- 10:00 PM—Kraft Music Hall — Bing Crosby,
Jimmy Dorsey, etc. (NBC-WEAF)

FRIDAY—

- 4:30 PM—U. S. Army Band (CBS-WABC)
- 5:30 PM—Terri La Franconi, tenor
(NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—Cities Service Concert (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:30 PM—Broadway Varieties (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Hollywood Hotel (CBS-WABC)
- 9:15—Cesare Sodero Directs (BBS-WOR)
- 10:00 PM—Kostelanetz Orch. with Soloists
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:30 PM—Marion Talley — Koestner's Orch.
(NBC-WEAF)

SATURDAY—

- 11:30 AM—Beethoven Sonata Series
(CBS-WABC)
- 12:00 AM—Concert Miniature (NBC-WEAF)
- 2:30 PM—Metropolitan Opera (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—Boston Pops Concerts (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Bruna Castagna, contralto
(CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—Hit Parade (CBS-WABC)

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